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THE POEMS  
OF  
THOMAS GRAY



NEW YORK  
WHITE, STOKES, AND ALLEN  
1886

KC 4835



## MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

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**T**HOMAS GRAY was born in Cornhill, London, on the day after Christmas-day, in the year 1716. His father, Philip Gray, was a money scrivener, and, according to most accounts, a hard-hearted man. His mother, whose maiden name was Dorothy Antrobus, appears to have been one of the most excellent and amiable of beings. Thomas was the only one of her twelve children who lived beyond infancy, and on this account she treated him with the greatest tenderness, which he always endeavored to repay by the most attentive care. After her death, he seldom mentioned her name without a sigh.



Through the instrumentality of his uncle, Mr. Antrobus, who was one of the college tutors, Thomas Gray was educated at Eton, where he became the friend of Horace Walpole, and of Richard West, the son of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. In the year 1736, Gray entered at Peter House, Cambridge; and at the same time Horace Walpole went to King's College. Neither appears to have spent much time at his college studies, and in 1738 Gray left Peter House without a degree. In the spring of 1739 he set out with Walpole on a tour through France and Italy. They were absent about two years and a half, when the friends disagreed, and Gray returned to England, just in time to witness his father's death. Soon after, his mother went to live at Stoke, near Windsor, and he returned to Cambridge, where he continued to reside, except during a few intervals, all the rest of his life.

In the year 1742, Gray wrote his "Ode to Spring;" this was followed by the "Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College" and the "Hymn to Adversity." Little notice was taken of these productions, and it was not till the "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard" was published, in the year 1749, that his works obtained any great share of popularity. This well-known "Elegy" has perhaps been reprinted more frequently than any other poem in the English language, and we learn that it is at the present day, above all, the greatest favorite in America. In 1753 Gray lost his mother, upon whose grave he placed this inscription :

BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER,

HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF

DOROTHY GRAY,

WIDOW; THE CAREFUL TENDER MOTHER

OF MANY CHILDREN; ONE OF WHOM ALONE

HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER.

During the following three years Gray wrote the "Ode on the Progress of

Poetry," and "The Bard." In the year 1756, he left Peter House, and "migrated" to Pembroke Hall, where he spent all his later years.

In 1768 the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge became vacant, and Gray received the appointment from the Duke of Grafton; who in the very next year was elected Chancellor of the University, when Gray wrote the Installation Ode, entitled "For Music," which was received with great applause.

In the autumn of 1770, in order to recover his health, he made a tour in Wales; but the symptoms of his illness increased, and in July in the next year he was seized with an attack of gout in the stomach, from which he died on the 30th of the same month.

Gray's Letters written to his friends West and Horace Walpole, and afterward to Mr. Mason, to whom he left

all his books and papers, are among the most charming that have ever been printed. His Latin poems are also justly extolled for their elegance and grace. He was considered the most learned man of his day, and it is much to be regretted that he did not devote more of his time to authorship. His "Letters and Poems," with "Memoirs of his Life and Writings," were published by his friend Mason, four years after his death.



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# POEMS OF THOMAS GRAY.

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## ON THE SPRING.

Lo ! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours,  
Fair Venus' train, appear,  
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,  
And wake the purple year !  
The Attic warbler pours her throat,  
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,  
The untaught harmony of spring :  
While, whisp'ring pleasure as they fly,  
Cool Zephyrs thro' the clear blue sky  
Their gather'd fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches  
stretch  
A broader browner shade,



Where'er the rude and moss-grown  
beech

O'er-canopies the glade,  
Beside some water's rushy brink  
With me the Muse shall sit, and think  
(At ease reclined in rustic state)  
How vain the ardor of the crowd,  
How low, how little are the proud,  
How indigent the great !

Still is the toiling hand of Care ;  
The panting herds repose :  
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air  
The busy murmur glows !  
The insect-youth are on the wing,  
Eager to taste the honeyed spring,  
And float amid the liquid noon :  
Some lightly o'er the current skim,  
Some show their gayly-gilded trim  
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye  
Such is the race of Man :  
And they that creep, and they that fly,  
Shall end where they began.

Alike the Busy and the Gay  
But flutter thro' life's little day,  
In Fortune's varying colors drest ;  
Brush'd by the hand of rough Mischance,  
Or chill'd by Age, their airy dance  
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,  
The sportive kind reply :  
Poor moralist ! and what art thou ?  
A solitary fly !  
Thy joys no glittering female meets,  
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,  
No painted plumage to display :  
On hasty wings thy youth is flown ;  
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—  
We frolic while 'tis May.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOR-  
ITE CAT,

*Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.*

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,  
Where China's gayest art had dyed  
    The azure flowers that blow ;  
Demurest of the tabby kind,  
The pensive Selima, reclined,  
    Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared :  
The fair round face, the snowy beard,  
    The velvet of her paws,  
Her coat, that with the tortoise vies,  
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,  
    She saw ; and purr'd applause.

Still had she gazed ; but 'midst the tide  
Two angel forms were seen to glide,  
    The Genii of the stream :

Their scaly armor's Tyrian hue  
Through richest purple to the view  
Betray'd a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw :  
A whisker first, and then a claw,  
With many an ardent wish,  
She stretch'd, in vain, to reach the prize.  
What female heart can gold despise ?  
What Cat's averse to fish ?

Presumptuous maid ! with looks intent  
Again she stretch'd, again she bent,  
Nor knew the gulf between.  
(Malignant Fate sat by, and smiled.)  
The slipp'ry verge her feet beguiled,  
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood,  
She mew'd to ev'ry wat'ry God,  
Some speedy aid to send.  
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirr'd :  
Nor cruel Tom, nor Susan heard.  
A fav'rite has no friend !

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,  
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,  
And be with caution bold.  
Not all that tempts your wand'ring eyes  
And heedless hearts is lawful prize,  
Nor all, that glisters, gold.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF  
ETON COLLEGE.

*Ἄνθρωπος, ἱκανὴ πρόφασις εἰς τὸ δυστυχεῖν.*

MENANDER.

YE distant spires, ye antique towers,  
That crown the wat'ry glade,  
Where grateful Science still adores  
Her Henry's holy shade ;  
And ye, that from the stately brow  
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below  
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,  
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers  
among  
Wanders the hoary Thames along  
His silver-winding way :

Ah, happy hills ! ah, pleasing shade !  
Ah, fields beloved in vain !  
Where once my careless childhood  
stray'd,  
A stranger yet to pain !

I feel the gales that from ye blow  
 A momentary bliss bestow,  
     As waving fresh their gladsome wing,  
 My weary soul they seem to soothe,  
 And, redolent of joy and youth,  
     To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen  
     Full many a sprightly race  
 Disporting on thy margent green,  
     The paths of pleasure trace ;  
 Who foremost now delight to cleave,  
 With pliant arm, thy glassy wave ?  
     The captive linnet which enthal ?  
 What idle progeny succeed  
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,  
     Or urge the flying ball ?

While some, on earnest business bent,  
     Their murm'ring labors ply  
 'Gainst graver hours that bring con-  
     To sweeten liberty :                      straint  
 Some bold adventurers disdain  
 The limits of their little reign,  
     And unknown regions dare descry :

Still as they run they look behind,  
They hear a voice in every wind,  
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,  
Less pleasing when possess ;  
The tear forgot as soon as shed,  
The sunshine of the breast :  
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,  
Wild wit, invention ever new,  
And lively cheer, of vigor born ;  
The thoughtless day, the easy night,  
The spirits pure, the slumbers light,  
That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas ! regardless of their doom,  
The little victims play ;  
No sense have they of ills to come,  
No care beyond to-day :  
Yet see, how all around 'em wait  
The ministers of human fate,  
And black Misfortune's baleful train !  
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,  
To seize their prey, the murth'rous band !  
Ah, tell them, they are men !



These shall the fury Passions tear,  
 The vultures of the mind,  
 Disdainful Anger, pallid Fear,  
 And Shame that skulks behind ;  
 Or pining Love shall waste their youth,  
 Or Jealousy, with rankling tooth,  
 That inly gnaws the secret heart ;  
 And Envy wan, and faded Care,  
 Grim-visaged comfortless Despair,  
 And Sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,  
 Then whirl the wretch from high,  
 To bitter Scorn a sacrifice,  
 And grinning Infamy.  
 The stings of Falsehood those shall try,  
 And hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,  
 That mocks the tear it forced to flow ;  
 And keen Remorse with blood defiled,  
 And moody Madness laughing wild  
 Amid severest woe.

Lo ! in the vale of years beneath  
 A grisly troop are seen,  
 The painful family of Death,  
 More hideous than their queen :

This racks the joints, this fires the veins,  
That every laboring sinew strains,  
Those in the deeper vitals rage :  
Lo ! Poverty, to fill the band,  
That numbs the soul with icy hand,  
And slow-consuming Age.

To each his suff' rings : all are men,  
Condemn'd alike to groan ;  
The tender for another's pain,  
Th' unfeeling for his own.  
Yet, ah ! why should they know their  
fate,  
Since sorrow never comes too late,  
And happiness too swiftly flies ?  
Thought would destroy their paradise.  
No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,  
'Tis folly to be wise.

## HYMN TO ADVERSITY.

—Ζῆνα—

\* \* \* \*

Τὸν φρονεῖν Βροτοὺς ὁδῶ-  
σαντα, τῷ πάθει μαθῶν  
Θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.

ÆSCH. *Agam.* ver. 181.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,  
Thou tamer of the human breast,  
Whose iron scourge and tort'ring hour  
The bad affright, afflict the best !  
Bound in thy adamantine chain,  
The proud are taught to taste of pain,  
And purple tyrants vainly groan  
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and  
alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth  
Virtue, his darling child, design'd,  
To thee he gave the heavenly birth,  
And bade to form her infant mind.

Stern, rugged nurse ! thy rigid lore  
With patience many a year she bore :  
What sorrow was, thou bad'st her know,  
And from her own she learn'd to melt  
at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown terrific, fly  
Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,  
Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless  
Joy,  
And leave us leisure to be good.  
Light they disperse, and with them go  
The summer friend, the flatt'ring foe ;  
By vain prosperity received,  
To her they vow their truth, and are  
again believed.

Wisdom in sable garb array'd,  
Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,  
And Melancholy, silent maid,  
With leaden eye that loves the  
ground,  
Still on thy solemn steps attend :  
Warm Charity, the gen'ral friend,

With Justice, to herself severe,  
 And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleas-  
 ing tear.

Oh ! gently on thy suppliant's head,  
 Dread goddess, lay thy chast'ning  
 hand !

Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,  
 Not circled with the vengeful band,  
 (As by the impious thou art seen,)  
 With thund'ring voice and threat'ning  
 mien,  
 With screaming Horror's fun'ral cry,  
 Despair, and fell Disease, and ghastly  
 Poverty :

Thy form benign, O goddess, wear,  
 Thy milder influence impart,  
 Thy philosophic train be there  
 To soften, not to wound, my heart.  
 The gen'rous spark extinct revive,  
 Teach me to love and to forgive,  
 Exact my own defects to scan,  
 What others are to feel, and know my-  
 self a Man.

## THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

### *A Pindaric Ode.*

Φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν ἐς

Δὲ τὸ πᾶν ἐρμηνέων

Χαρίζετ.

PINDAR. *Ol.* II.

#### I. I.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre, awake,  
And give to rapture all thy trembling  
strings.  
From Helicon's harmonious springs  
A thousand rills their mazy progress  
take :  
The laughing flowers that round them  
blow  
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.  
Now the rich stream of music winds  
along,  
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,

Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden  
 reign ;  
 Now rolling down the steep amain,  
 Headlong, impetuous, see it pour ;  
 The rocks and nodding groves rebellow  
 to the roar.

## I. 2.

Oh ! Sov'reign of the willing soul,  
 Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing  
 airs,  
 Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares  
 And frantic Passions hear thy soft  
 control.  
 On Thracia's hills the Lord of War  
 Has curb'd the fury of his car,  
 And dropt his thirsty lance at thy com-  
 mand.  
 Perching on the sceptred hand  
 Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd  
 king  
 With ruffled plumes and flagging wing :  
 Quench'd in dark clouds of slumber lie  
 The terror of his beak, and lightnings of  
 his eye.

## I. 3.

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,  
 Temper'd to thy warbled lay.  
 O'er Idalia's velvet-green  
 The rosy-crowned Loves are seen  
 On Cytherea's day ;  
 With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleas-  
     ures,  
 Frisking light in frolic measures ;  
 Now pursuing, now retreating,  
     Now in circling troops they meet :  
 To brisk notes in cadence beating,  
     Glance their many-twinkling feet.  
 Slow melting strains their Queen's ap-  
     proach declare ;  
     Where'er she turns the Graces homage  
     pay.  
 With arms sublime, that float upon the  
     air,  
     In gliding state she wins her easy way :  
 O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom,  
     move  
 The bloom of young Desire and purple  
     light of Love.



## II. I.

Man's feeble race what ills await !  
 Labor, and Penury, the racks of Pain,  
 Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,  
 And Death, sad refuge from the storms  
 of fate !  
 The fond complaint, my song, disprove,  
 And justify the laws of Jove.  
 Say, has he given in vain the heav'nly  
 Muse ?  
 Night and all her sickly dews,  
 Her spectres wan, and birds of boding  
 cry,  
 He gives to range the dreary sky ;  
 Till down the eastern cliffs afar  
 Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring  
 shafts of war.

## II. 2.

In climes beyond the solar road,  
 Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built moun-  
 tains roam,  
 The Muse has broke the twilight gloom  
 To cheer the shivering native's dull  
 abode.

And oft, beneath the od'rous shade  
 Of Chili's boundless forests laid,  
 She deigns to hear the savage youth  
     repeat,  
 In loose numbers wildly sweet,  
 Their feather-cinctured chiefs, and dusky  
     loves.  
 Her track, where'er the goddess roves,  
 Glory pursue, and gen'rous Shame,  
 Th' unconquerable Mind, and freedom's  
     holy flame.

## II. 3.

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,  
 Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,  
     Fields, where cool Ilissus laves,  
     Or where Mæander's amber waves  
 In lingering lab'rins creep,  
     How do your tuneful echoes languish,  
     Mute, but to the voice of anguish !  
 Where each old poetic mountain  
     Inspiration breathed around ;  
 Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain  
     Murmur'd deep a solemn sound :

Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,  
 Left their Parnassus for the Latian  
 plains.

Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant  
 Power,

And coward Vice, that revels in her  
 chains.

When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,  
 They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-  
 encircled coast.

## II. I.

Far from the sun and summer-gale,  
 In thy green lap was Nature's Darling  
 laid,

What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,

To him the mighty mother did unveil

Her awful face : the dauntless child

Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.

"This pencil take (she said), whose  
 colors clear

Richly paint the vernal year :

Thine too these golden keys, immortal

Boy !

This can unlock the gates of joy ;

Of horror that, and thrilling fears,  
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic  
tears."

III. 2.

Nor second He, that rode sublime  
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy,  
The secrets of th' abyss to spy.  
He pass'd the flaming bounds of place  
and time :  
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,  
Where angels tremble while they gaze,  
He saw ; but, blasted with excess of light,  
Closed his eyes in endless night.  
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,  
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear  
Two coursers of ethereal race,  
With necks in thunder clothed, and long-resounding pace.

III. 3.

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !  
Bright-eyed Fancy, hov'ring o'er,

Scatters from her pictured urn  
Thoughts that breathe, and words that  
burn.

But ah ! 'tis heard no more——

Oh ! lyre divine, what daring spirit  
Wakes thee now ? Tho' he inherit  
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,  
That the Theban eagle bear,  
Sailing with supreme dominion  
Thro' the azure deep of air ;  
Yet oft before his infant eye would run  
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's  
ray,

With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun :  
Yet shall he mount, and keep his dis-  
tant way

Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,  
Beneath the Good how far—but far above  
the Great.

## THE BARD.

### *A Pindaric Ode.*

#### I. I.

"RUIN seize thee, ruthless King !  
Confusion on thy banners wait ;  
Tho' fann'd by Conquest's crimson wing,  
They mock the air with idle state.  
Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail,  
Nor e'en thy virtues, Tyrant, shall avail  
To save thy secret soul from nightly  
fears,  
From Cambria's curse, from Cam-  
bria's tears !"

Such were the sounds that o'er the  
crested pride  
Of the first Edward scatter'd wild  
dismay,  
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy  
side  
He wound with toilsome march his long  
array.

Stout Glo'ster stood aghast in speechless  
trance :

“To arms !” cried Mortimer, and couch'd  
his quiv'ring lance.

## I. 2.

/ On a rock, whose haughty brow  
Frowns o'er cold Conway's foaming  
flood,

Robed in the sable garb of woe,  
With haggard eyes the poet stood ;  
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair  
Stream'd, like a meteor, to the troubled  
air ;)

And with a master's hand, and prophet's  
fire,

Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

“Hark, how each giant-oak, and des-  
ert cave,

Sighs to the torrent's awful voice be-  
neath !

O'er thee, O King ! their hundred arms  
they wave,

Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs  
breathe ;

Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,  
To high-born Hoel's harp, or soft Llewellyn's lay.

## I. 3.

“Cold is Cadwallow's tongue,  
That hush'd the stormy main :  
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed :  
Mountains, ye mourn in vain  
Modred, whose magic song  
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-  
topt head.

On dreary Arvon's shore they lie,  
Smear'd with gore, and ghastly pale :  
Far, far aloof th' affrighted ravens sail ;  
The famish'd eagle screams, and  
passes by.

Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,  
Dear as the light that visits these sad  
eyes,

Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my  
heart,

Ye died amidst your dying country's  
cries—

No more I weep. They do not sleep.



On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,  
 I see them sit, they linger yet,  
 Avengers of their native land :  
 With me in dreadful harmony they join,  
 And weave with bloody hands the tissue  
 of thy line.

## II. I

“ Weave the warp, and weave the  
 woof,  
 The winding-sheet of Edward's race  
 Give ample room, and verge enough  
 The characters of hell to trace.  
 Mark the year, and mark the night,  
 When Severn shall re-echo with affright ;  
 The shrieks of death, thro' Berkley's  
 roof that ring,  
 Shrieks of an agonizing King !  
 She-wolf of France, with unrelenting  
 fangs,  
 That tear'st the bowels of thy mangled  
 mate,  
 From thee be born, who o'er thy country  
 hangs

The scourge of heav'n. What terrors  
round him wait !  
Amazement in his van, with Flight combined,  
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude  
behind.

## II. 2.

"Mighty victor, mighty lord !  
Low on his funeral couch he lies !  
No pitying heart, no eye, afford  
A tear to grace his obsequies.  
Is the sable warrior fled ?  
Thy son is gone. He rests among the  
dead.  
The swarm, that in thy noontide beam  
were born ?  
Gone to salute the rising morn.  
Fair laughs the morn, and soft the  
zephyr blows,  
While proudly riding o'er the azure  
realm  
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes ;  
Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at  
the helm ;

Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's  
sway,  
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his  
ev'ning prey.

## II. 3.

" Fill high the sparkling bowl,  
 The rich repast prepare,  
 Reft of a crown, he yet may share the  
 feast :  
 Close by the regal chair  
 Fell Thirst and Famine scowl  
 A baleful smile upon their baffled  
 guest.  
 Heard ye the din of battle bray,  
 Lance to lance, and horse to horse ?  
 Long years of havoc urge their des-  
 tined course,  
 And thro' the kindred squadrons mow  
 their way.  
 Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting  
 shame,  
 With many a foul and midnight murder  
 fed, [fame,  
 Revere his consort's faith, his father's

And spare the meek usurper's holy  
head.

Above, below, the rose of snow,  
Twined with her blushing foe, we  
spread :

The bristled boar in infant-gore  
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.

Now, brothers, bending o'er the ac-  
cursed loom,

Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify  
his doom.

## III. I.

“ Edward, lo ! to sudden fate  
(Weave we the woof. The thread is  
spun)

Half of thy heart we consecrate.  
(The web is wove. The work is done.)  
Stay, oh stay ! nor thus forlorn  
Leave me unblest'd, unpitied, here to  
mourn :

In yon bright track, that fires the west-  
ern skies,  
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.

But oh ! what solemn scenes on Snow-  
don's height  
Descending slow their glittering skirts  
unroll ?  
Visions of glory, spare my aching sight !  
Ye unborn ages, crowd not on my  
soul !  
No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.  
All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's  
issue, hail !

III. 2.

“ Girt with many a baron bold  
Sublime their starry fronts they rear ;  
And gorgeous dames, and statesmen  
old  
In bearded majesty, appear.  
In the midst a form divine !  
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton line ;  
Her lion - port, her awe - commanding  
face,  
Attemper'd sweet to virgin-grace.  
What strings symphonious tremble in  
the air,

What strains of vocal transport round  
her play,  
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin,  
hear ;  
They breathe a soul to animate thy  
clay.  
Bright Rapture calls, and, soaring as  
she sings,  
Waves in the eye of heav'n her many-  
color'd wings.

## III. 3.

“The verse adorn again  
Fierce war, and faithful love,  
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.  
In buskin'd measures move  
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,  
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing  
breast.  
A voice, as of the cherub-choir,  
Gales from blooming Eden bear ;  
And distant warblings lessen on my ear,  
That lost in long futurity expire.  
Fond impious man, think'st thou yon  
sanguine cloud,

Raised by thy breath, has quench'd  
 the orb of day ?  
 To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,  
 And warms the nations with redoubled  
 ray.  
 Enough for me ; with joy I see  
 The diff'rent doom our fates assign.  
 Be thine despair, and sceptred care,  
 To triumph, and to die, are mine."  
 He spoke, and headlong from the moun-  
 tain's height  
 Deep in the roaring tide he plunged to  
 endless night.

## ODE FOR MUSIC.

*Irregular.*

### I. AIR.

“ HENCE, avaunt ('tis holy ground),  
Comus, and his midnight-crew,  
And Ignorance with looks profound,  
And dreaming Sloth of pallid hue,  
Mad Sedition's cry profane,  
Servitude that hugs her chain,  
Nor in these consecrated bowers  
Let painted Flatt'ry hide her serpent-  
train in flowers.

### CHORUS.

Nor Envy base, nor creeping Gain,  
Dare the Muse's walk to stain.  
While bright-eyed Science watches  
round :  
Hence, away, 'tis holy ground !”



II. RECITATIVE.

From yonder realms of empyrean day  
 Bursts on my ear th' indignant lay :  
 There sit the sainted sage, the bard di-  
     vine,  
 The few, whom genius gave to shine  
 Thro' every unborn age, and undiscov-  
     er'd clime.

Rapt in celestial transport they :  
 Yet hither oft a glance from high  
 They send of tender sympathy  
 To bless the place, where on their open-  
     ing soul

First the genuine ardor stole.  
 'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell,  
 And, as the choral warblings round him  
     swell,  
 Meek Newton's self bends from his state  
     sublime,  
 And nods his hoary head, and listens to  
     the rhyme.

III. AIR.

“Ye brown o'er-arching groves,  
 That Contemplation loves,

Where willowy Camus lingers with delight !  
Oft at the blush of dawn  
I trod your level lawn,  
Oft woo'd the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright  
In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of  
Folly,  
With Freedom by my side, and soft-eyed  
Melancholy."

## IV. RECITATIVE.

But hark ! the portals sound, and pacing  
forth  
With solemn steps and slow,  
High potentates, and dames of royal  
birth,  
And mitred fathers in long order go :  
Great Edward, with the lilies on his  
brow  
From haughty Gallia torn,  
And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn  
That wept her bleeding Love, and princely  
Clare,

And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose,  
 The rival of her crown and of her woes,  
 And either Henry there,  
 The murder'd saint, and the majestic  
     lord  
 That broke the bonds of Rome.  
 (Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,  
 Their human passions now no more,  
 Save Charity, that glows beyond the  
     tomb.)

## ACCOMPANIED.

All that on Granta's fruitful plain  
 Rich streams of regal bounty pour'd,  
 And bade these awful fanes and tur-  
     rets rise,  
 To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning  
     come ;  
 And thus they speak in soft accord  
 The liquid language of the skies :

## V. QUARTETTO.

“ What is grandeur, what is power ?  
 Heavier toil, superior pain.

What the bright reward we gain ?  
The grateful memory of the good.  
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,  
The bee's collected treasures sweet,  
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter  
yet  
The still small voice of gratitude."

## VI. RECITATIVE.

Foremost and leaning from her golden  
cloud

The venerable Marg'ret see !  
"Welcome, my noble son (she cries  
aloud),

To this, thy kindred train, and me :  
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace  
A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.

## AIR.

Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,  
The flow'r unheeded shall descry,  
And bid it round heav'n's altars shed  
The fragrance of its blushing head :  
Shall raise from earth the latent gem  
To glitter on the diadem.

## VII. RECITATIVE.

"Lo! Granta waits to lead her bloom-  
 ing band,  
 Not obvious, nor obtrusive, she  
 No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings;  
 Nor dares with courtly tongue refined  
 Profane thy inborn royalty of mind :  
 She reveres herself and thee.  
 With modest pride to grace thy youth-  
 ful brow,  
 The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore,  
 she brings,  
 And to thy just, thy gentle hand,  
 Submits the fasces of her sway,  
 While spirits blest above and men below  
 Join with glad voice the loud symphoni-  
 ous lay.

## VIII. GRAND CHORUS.

"Thro' the wild waves as they roar,  
 With watchful eye and dauntless mien,  
 Thy steady course of honor keep,  
 Nor fear the rocks, nor seek the shore :  
 The Star of Brunswick smiles serene;  
 And gilds the horrors of the deep."

## THE FATAL SISTERS.

*An Ode. From the Norse Tongue.*

Now the storm begins to lower,  
    (Haste, the loom of hell prepare,)  
Iron sleet of arrowy shower  
    Hurtles in the darken'd air.

Glitt'ring lances are the loom,  
    Where the dusky warp we strain,  
Weaving many a soldier's doom,  
    Orkney's woe, and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow !  
    ('Tis of human entrails made)  
And the weights, that play below,  
    Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,  
    Shoot the trembling cords along.

Sword, that once a monarch bore,  
Keep the tissue close and strong.

Mista, black terrific maid,  
Sangrida, and Hilda, see,  
Join the wayward work to aid :  
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set,  
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,  
Blade with clattering buckler meet,  
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)  
Let us go, and let us fly,  
Where our friends the conflict share,  
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,  
Wading through th' ensanguined field,  
Gondula, and Geira, spread  
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,  
Ours to kill, and ours to spare :

Spite of danger he shall live,  
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They, whom once the desert-beach  
Pent within its bleak domain,  
Soon their ample sway shall stretch  
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,  
Gored with many a gaping wound :  
Fate demands a nobler head ;  
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Eirin weep,  
Ne'er again his likeness see ;  
Long her strains in sorrow steep :  
Strains of immortality !

Horror covers all the heath,  
Clouds of carnage blot the sun.  
Sisters, weave the web of death ;  
Sisters, cease ; the work is done.

Hail the task, and hail the hands !  
Songs of joy and triumph sing !



Joy to the victorious bands ;  
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal, thou that hear'st the tale,  
Learn the tenor of our song.  
Scotland, thro' each winding vale  
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters, hence with spurs of speed :  
Each her thundering falchion wield ;  
Each bestride her sable steed.  
Hurry, hurry, to the field !

## THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

*An Ode. From the Norse Tongue.*

UPROSE the king of men with speed,  
And saddled straight his coal-black  
steed ;

Down the yawning steep he rode,  
That leads to Hela's drear abode.  
Him the dog of darkness spied ;  
His shaggy throat he open'd wide,  
(While from his jaws, with carnage fill'd,  
Foam and human gore distill'd :)  
Hoarse he bays with hideous din,  
Eyes that glow, and fangs that grin ;  
And long pursues with fruitless yell,  
The father of the powerful spell.  
Onward still his way he takes,  
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)  
Till full before his fearless eyes  
The portals nine of hell arise.

Right against the eastern gate,  
 By the moss-grown pile he sate ;  
 Where long of yore to sleep was laid  
 The dust of the prophetic maid.  
 Facing to the northern clime,  
 Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme ;  
 Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,  
 The thrilling verse that wakes the dead :  
 Till from out the hollow ground  
 Slowly breathed a sullen sound.

## PROPHETESS.

What call unknown, what charms pre-  
     sume  
 To break the quiet of the tomb ?  
 Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,  
 And drags me from the realms of night ?  
 Long on these mould'ring bones have  
     beat  
 The winter's snow, the summer's heat,  
 The drenching dews, and driving rain !  
 Let me, let me sleep again.  
 Who is he, with voice unblest,  
 That calls me from the bed of rest ?

## ODIN.

A traveller, to thee unknown,  
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.  
Thou the deeds of light shalt know ;  
Tell me what is done below,  
For whom yon glitt'ring board is spread,  
Dress'd for whom yon golden bed ?

## PROPHETESS.

Mantling in the goblet see  
The pure bev'rage of the bee :  
O'er it hangs the shield of gold ;  
'Tis the drink of Balder bold :  
Balder's head to death is giv'n.  
Pain can reach the sons of heav'n !  
Unwilling I my lips unclose :  
Leave me, leave me to repose.

## ODIN.

Once again my call obey,  
Prophetess, arise, and say,  
What dangers Odin's child await,  
Who the author of his fate ?

PROPHETESS.

In Hoder's hand the hero's doom ;  
His brother sends him to the tomb.  
Now my weary lips I close :  
Leave me, leave me to repose.

ODIN.

Prophetess, my spell obey,  
Once again arise, and say,  
Who th' avenger of his guilt,  
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt?

PROPHETESS. •

In the caverns of the west,  
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,  
A wondrous boy shall Rinda bear,  
Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair,  
Nor wash his visage in the stream,  
Nor see the sun's departing beam,  
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile  
Flaming on the fun'ral pile.  
Now my weary lips I close :  
Leave me, leave me to repose.

## ODIN.

Yet a while my call obey ;  
Prophetess, awake, and say,  
What virgins these, in speechless woe,  
That bend to earth their solemn brow,  
That their flaxen tresses tear,  
And snowy veils that float in air ?  
Tell me whence their sorrows rose :  
Then I leave thee to repose.

## PROPHETESS.

Ha ! no traveller art thou,  
King of men, I know thee now ;  
Mightiest of a mighty line——

## ODIN.

No boding maid of skill divine  
Art thou, nor prophetess of good ;  
But mother of the giant brood !

## PROPHETESS.

Hie thee hence, and boast at home,  
That never shall inquirer come

To break my iron-sleep again ;  
Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain ;  
Never, till substantial Night  
Has reassumed her ancient right ;  
Till wrapt in flames, in ruin hurl'd,  
Sinks the fabric of the world.

## THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

*A Fragment. From the Welsh.*

OWEN's praise demands my song,  
Owen swift, and Owen strong ;  
Fairest flower of Roderic's stem,  
Gwyneth's shield, and Britain's gem.  
He nor heaps his brooded stores,  
Nor on all profusely pours ;  
Lord of every regal heart,  
Liberal hand, and open heart.

Big with hosts of mighty name,  
Squadrons three against him came ;  
This the force of Eirin hiding,  
Side by side as proudly riding,  
On her shadow long and gay  
Lochlin ploughs the wat'ry way ;  
There the Norman sails afar  
Catch the winds and join the war ;  
Black and huge along they sweep,  
Burdens of the angry deep.



Dauntless on his native sands  
 The dragon-son of Mona stands ;  
 In glitt'ring arms and glory drest,  
 High he rears his ruby crest.  
 There the thund'ring strokes begin,  
 There the press, and there the din ;  
 Talymalfra's rocky shore  
 Echoing to the battle's roar.  
 Check'd by the torrent-tide of blood,  
 Backward Meinai rolls his flood ;  
 While, heap'd his master's feet around,  
 Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground.  
 Where his glowing eye-balls turn,  
 Thousand banners round him burn ;  
 Where he points his purple spear,  
 Hasty, hasty rout is there,  
 Marking with indignant eye  
 Fear to stop, and shame to fly.  
 There confusion, terror's child,  
 Conflict fierce, and ruin wild,  
 Agony, that pants for breath,  
 Despair and honorable death.

\* \* \* \* \*

## SONNET

### *On the Death of Mr. Richard West.*

IN vain to me the smiling mornings  
shine,  
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden  
fire :  
The birds in vain their amorous descant  
join ;  
Or cheerful fields resume their green  
attire ;  
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine ;  
A different object do these eyes re-  
quire ;  
My lonely anguish melts no heart but  
mine ;  
And in my breast the imperfect joys  
expire.

Yet morning smiles the busy race to  
     cheer,  
     And new-born pleasure brings to hap-  
         pier men :  
 The fields to all their wonted tribute  
     bear :  
     To warm their little loves the birds  
         complain ;  
 I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
     And weep the more, because I weep  
         in vain.

## EPITAPH

*On Mrs. Jane Clerke.*

Lo ! where this silent marble weeps,  
A friend, a wife, a mother sleeps :  
A heart, within whose sacred cell  
The peaceful virtues loved to dwell.  
Affection warm, and faith sincere,  
And soft humanity were there.  
In agony, in death resign'd,  
She felt the wound she left behind ;  
Her infant image here below  
Sits smiling on a father's woe :  
Whom what awaits, while yet he strays  
Along the lonely vale of days ;  
A pang, to secret sorrow dear ;  
A sigh ; an unavailing tear ;  
Till Time shall every grief remove,  
With life, with memory, and with love.

## EPITAPH

*On Sir William Williams.*

HERE, foremost in the dangerous paths  
of fame,  
Young Williams fought for England's  
fair renown ;  
His mind each Muse, each Grace adorn'd  
his frame,  
Nor Envy dared to view him with a  
frown.

At Aix, his voluntary sword he drew,  
There first in blood his infant honor  
seal'd ;  
From fortune, pleasure, science, love, he  
flew,  
And scorn'd repose when Britain took  
the field.

With eyes of flame, and cool undaunted  
breast,

Victor he stood on Belleisle's rocky  
steeps—

Ah, gallant youth ! this marble tells the  
rest,

Where melancholy friendship bends,  
and weeps.

## THE DEATH OF HOEL.

### *An Ode.*

HAD I but the torrent's might,  
With headlong rage and wild affright  
Upon Deira's squadrons hurl'd  
To rush, and sweep them from the  
world !

Too, too secure in youthful pride,  
By them, my friend, my Hoel, died,  
Great Cian's son : of Madoc old  
He ask'd no heaps of hoarded gold ;  
Alone in nature's wealth array'd  
He ask'd and had the lovely maid.

To Cattræth's vale in glitt'ring row  
Thrice two hundred warriors go :  
Every warrior's manly neck  
Chains of regal honor deck,  
Wreath'd in many a golden link :  
From the golden cup they drink

Nectar that the bees produce,  
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.  
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn ;  
But none from Cattræth's vale return,  
Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong  
(Bursting through the bloody throng),  
And I, the meanest of them all,  
That live to weep and sing their fall.

---

HAVE ye seen the tusky boar,  
Or the bull, with sullen roar,  
On surrounding foes advance ?  
So Caràdoc bore his lance.

---

CONAN'S name, my lay, rehearse,  
Build to him the lofty verse,  
Sacred tribute of the bard,  
Verse, the hero's sole reward.  
As the flame's devouring force,  
As the whirlwind in its course,  
As the thunder's fiery stroke,  
Glancing on the shiver'd oak,  
Did the sword of Conan mow  
The crimson harvest of the foe.



**ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY  
CHURCHYARD.**

**THE** curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er  
the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his  
weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and  
to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on  
the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning  
flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant  
folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r,  
The moping owl does to the moon  
complain

Of such as, wand'ring near her secret  
bow'r,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew  
tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a  
mould'ring heap,  
Each in his narrow cell forever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet  
sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing  
morn,  
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-  
built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing  
horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their  
lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth  
shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening  
care ;

No children run to lisp their sire's re-  
turn,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to  
share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe  
has broke :  
How jocund did they drive their team  
afield !  
How bow'd the woods beneath their  
sturdy stroke !

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny ob-  
scure ;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful  
smile  
The short and simple annals of the  
poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of  
pow'r,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth  
e'er gave,

Await alike th' inevitable hour.

The paths of glory lead but to the  
grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the  
fault,

If memory o'er their tomb no trophies  
raise,

Where through the long drawn aisle  
and fretted vault

The pealing anthem swells the note of  
praise.

Can storied urn, or animated bust,

Back to its mansion call the fleeting  
breath ?

Can honor's voice provoke the silent  
dust,

Or flatt'ry soothe the dull cold ear of  
death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid

Some heart once pregnant with celest-  
tial fire ;

Hands, that the rod of empire might  
 have sway'd,  
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre :

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample  
 page  
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er  
 unroll ;  
 Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the  
 soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
 The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean  
 bear :  
 Full many a flower is born to blush un-  
 seen,  
 And waste its sweetness on the desert  
 air.

Some village Hampden, that, with daunt-  
 less breast,  
 The little tyrant of his fields with-  
 stood,

Some mute inglorious Milton here may  
rest,  
Some Cromwell guiltless of his coun-  
try's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to com-  
mand,  
The threats of pain and ruin to de-  
spise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's  
eyes,

Their lot forbade : nor circumscribed  
alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes  
confined ;  
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a  
throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on man-  
kind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth  
to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous  
shame,

Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride  
 With incense kindled at the Muse's  
 flame.

Far from the madding erowd's ignoble  
 strife,  
 Their sober wishes never learn'd to  
 stray ;  
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life  
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their  
 way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to pro-  
 tect  
 Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
 With uncouth rhymes and shapeless  
 sculpture deck'd,  
 Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' un-  
 letter'd Muse,  
 The place of fame and elegy supply :  
 And many a holy text around she strews,  
 That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a  
prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er re-  
signed,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful  
day,  
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look  
behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul  
relies,  
Some pious drops the closing eye re-  
quires ;  
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature  
cries,  
E'en in our ashes live their wonted  
fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhon-  
or'd dead,  
Dost in these lines their artless tale  
relate ;  
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy  
fate,—



Haply some hoary-headed swain may  
say,

“Oft have we seen him at the peep of  
dawn

Brushing with hasty steps the dews  
away,

To meet the sun upon the upland  
lawn :

“There at the foot of yonder nodding  
beech,

That wreathes its old fantastic roots  
so high,

His listless length at noontide would he  
stretch,

And pore upon the brook that babbles  
by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in  
scorn,

Mutt’ring his wayward fancies he  
would rove ;

Now drooping, woful-wan, like one for-  
lorn,

Or crazed with care, or cross’d in  
hopeless love.

“One morn I miss'd him on his 'cus-  
tom'd hill,  
Along the heath, and near his fav'rite  
tree ;  
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,  
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was  
he :

“The next, with dirges due in sad array,  
Slow through the church-way path we  
saw him borne :—  
Approach and read (for thou canst read)  
the lay  
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged  
thorn.”

## THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth  
A youth to fortune and to fame un-  
known ;  
Fair Science frowned not on his humble  
birth,  
And Melancholy mark'd him for her  
own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,

Heaven did a recompense as largely send :

He gave to mis'ry (all he had) a tear,  
He gain'd from heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread  
abode,

(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)

The bosom of his Father and his God.

## A LONG STORY.

IN Britain's isle, no matter where,  
An ancient pile of building stands :  
The Huntingdons and Hattons there  
Employed the pow'r of fairy hands

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,  
Each panel in achievements clothing,  
Rich windows that exclude the light,  
And passages, that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,  
When he had fifty winters o'er him,  
My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls ;  
The seals and maces danced before  
him.

His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,  
His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,

Moved the stout heart of England's  
queen,  
Though Pope and Spaniard could not  
trouble it.

What, in the very first beginning  
Shame of the versifying tribe !  
Your hist'ry whither are you spinning !  
Can you do nothing but describe ?

A house there is (and that's enough)  
From whence one fatal morning issues  
A brace of warriors not in buff,  
But rustling in their silks and tissues.

The first came *cap-à-pie* from France,  
Her conqu'ring destiny fulfilling,  
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,  
And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other Amazon kind Heav'n  
Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and sa-  
tire ;  
But Cobham had the polish giv'n,  
And tipp'd her arrows with good-  
nature.

To celebrate her eyes, her air—  
Coarse panegyrics would but tease  
her ;  
Melissa is her "*nom de guerre*."  
Alas, who would not wish to please  
her

With bonnet blue and capuchine,  
And aprons long they hid their armor ;  
And veil'd their weapons, bright and  
keen,  
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame, in the shape of Mr. P—t,  
(By this time all the parish know it,)  
Had told that thereabouts there lurk'd  
A wicked imp they called a poet :

Who prowl'd the country far and near,  
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,  
Dried up the cows, and lamed the deer,  
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the  
pheasants.

My lady heard their joint petition,  
Swore by her coronet and ermine,

She'd issue out her high commission  
To rid the manor of such vermin.

The heroines undertook the task,  
Thro' lanes unknown, o'er stiles they  
ventured,

Rapp'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,  
But bounce into the parlor enter'd.

The trembling family they daunt,  
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they  
tattle,

Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,  
And up-stairs in a whirlwind rattle :

Each hole and cupboard they explore,  
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,  
Run hurry-scurry round the floor,  
And o'er the bed and tester clamber ;

Into the drawers and china pry,  
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio !  
Under a tea-cup he might lie,  
Or creased, like dogs'-ears, in a folio.

On the first marching of the troops,  
The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,

Convey'd him underneath their hoops  
To a small closet in the garden.

So Rumor says : (who will, believe,)  
But that they left the door ajar,  
Where, safe and laughing in his sleeve,  
He heard the distant din of war.

Short was his joy. He little knew  
The pow'r of magic was no fable ;  
Out of the window, whisk, they flew,  
But left a spell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,  
The poet felt a strange disorder ;  
Transparent bird-lime form'd the middle,  
And chains invisible the border.

So cunning was the apparatus,  
The powerful pot-hooks did so move  
him,  
That, will he, nill he, to the great house  
He went, as if the devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no sign of grace,  
For folks in fear are apt to pray)

.



To Phœbus he preferr'd his case,  
 And begg'd his aid that dreadful day.

The godhead would have back'd his  
 quarrel,

But with a blush, on recollection,  
 Own'd that his quiver and his laurel  
 'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.

The court was safe, the culprit there,  
 Forth from their gloomy mansions  
 creeping,

The lady Janes and Joans repair,  
 And from the gallery stand peeping :

Such as in silence of the night  
 Come (sweep) along some winding  
 entry,

(Tyacke has often seen the sight,)  
 Or at the chapel-door stand sentry :

In peak'd hoods and mantles tarnish'd,  
 Sour visages, enough to scare ye,  
 High dames of honor once, that garnish'd

The drawing-room of fierce Queen  
 Mary.

The peeress comes. The audience stare,  
And doff their hats with due submission :

She curtsies, as she takes her chair,  
To all the people of condition.

The bard, with many an artful fib,  
Had in imagination fenced him,  
Disproved the arguments of Squib,  
And all that Groom could urge against him.

But soon his rhetoric forsook him,  
When he the solemn hall had seen ;  
A sudden fit of ague shook him,  
He stood as mute as poor Macleane.

Yet something he was heard to mutter,  
“ How in the park beneath an old tree,  
(Without design to hurt the butter,  
Or any malice to the poultry,)

“ He once or twice had penn'd a sonnet :  
Yet hoped, that he might save his bacon :

Numbers would give their oath upon it,  
He ne'er was for a conj'rer taken.”

The ghostly prudes with haggard face  
 Already had condemn'd the sinner.  
 My lady rose, and with a grace—  
 She smiled, and bid him come to dinner.

“Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,  
 Why, what can the Viscountess  
 mean?”  
 (Cried the square-hoods in woful fidget)  
 “The times are alter'd quite and  
 clean!

“Decorum's turn'd to mere civility;  
 Her hair and all her manners show it.  
 Commend me to her affability!  
 Speak to a commoner and a poet!”

[Here five hundred stanzas are lost.]

And so God save our noble king,  
 And guard us from long-winded lubbers,  
 That to eternity would sing,  
 And keep my lady from her rubbers.

**POSTHUMOUS  
POEMS AND FRAGMENTS.**

---

**ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING  
FROM VICISSITUDE.**

Now the golden morn aloft  
    Waves her dew-bespangled wing,  
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft  
    She woos the tardy Spring :  
Till April starts, and calls around  
The sleeping fragrance from the ground ;  
And lightly o'er the living scene  
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,  
    Frisking ply their feeble feet ;  
Forgetful of their wintry trance,  
    The birds his presence greet :

But chief, the skylark warbles high  
 His trembling thrilling ecstasy ;  
 And, lessening from the dazzled sight,  
 Melts into air and liquid light.

Rise, my soul ; on wings of fire,  
     Rise the rapt'rous choir among ;  
 Hark ! 'tis Nature strikes the lyre,  
     And leads the gen'ral song :  
 " Warm let the lyric transport flow,  
 Warm as the ray that bids it glow ;  
 And animates the vernal grove  
 With health, with harmony, and love."

Yesterday the sullen year  
     Saw the snowy whirlwind fly ;  
 Mute was the music of the air,  
     The herd stood drooping by :  
 Their raptures now that wildly flow,  
 No yesterday nor morrow know ;  
 'Tis man alone that joy describes  
 With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow  
     Soft Reflection's hand can trace ;  
 And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw  
     A melancholy grace ;

While Hope prolongs our happier hour,  
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower  
And blacken round our weary way,  
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,  
See a kindred Grief pursue ;  
Behind the steps that Misery treads,  
Approaching Comfort view :  
The hues of Bliss more brightly glow,  
Chastised by sabler tints of Woe ;  
And blended form, with artful strife,  
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tossed  
On the thorny bed of pain,  
At length repair his vigor lost,  
And breathe and walk again :  
The meanest floweret of the vale,  
The simplest note that swells the gale,  
The common sun, the air, the skies,  
To him are opening paradise.

Humble Quiet builds her cell,  
Near the source whence Pleasure  
flows ;

She eyes the clear crystalline well,  
 And tastes it as it goes.  
 "While " far below the "madding "  
     crowd  
 "Rush headlong to the dangerous flood,"  
 Where broad and turbulent it sweeps,  
 "And " perish in the boundless deeps.

Mark where Indolence and Pride,  
     "Sooth'd by flattery's tinkling sound,"  
 Go, softly rolling, side by side,  
     Their dull but daily round :  
 "To these, if Hebe's self should bring  
 The purest cup from Pleasure's spring,  
 Say, can they taste the flavor high  
 Of sober, simple, genuine joy ?

" Mark Ambition's march sublime  
     Up to Power's meridian height :  
 While pale eyed Envy sees him climb,  
     And sickens at the sight.  
 Phantoms of danger, death, and dread,  
 Float hourly round Ambition's head ;  
 While Spleen, within his rival's breast,  
 Sits brooding on her scorpion breast.

"Happier he, the peasant, far,  
From the pangs of passion free,  
That breathes the keen yet wholesome  
air

Of rugged penury.  
He, when his morning task is done,  
Can slumber in the noontide sun ;  
And hie him home, at evening's close,  
To sweet repast, and calm repose.

"He, unconscious whence the bliss,  
Feels, and owns in carols rude,  
That all the circling joys are his,  
Of dear vicissitude.  
From toil he wins his spirits light,  
From busy day the peaceful night ;  
Rich, from the very want of wealth,  
In heaven's best treasures, peace and  
health."



TRANSLATION OF A PASSAGE  
FROM STATIUS.

*Theb. Lib. vi. Ver. 704-724.*

THIRD in the labors of the disc came on,  
With sturdy step and slow, Hippome-  
don ;  
Artful and strong he poised the well-  
known weight,  
By Phlegyas warn'd, and fired by Mnes-  
theus' fate,  
That to avoid, and this to emulate.  
His vigorous arm he tried before he  
flung,  
Braced all his nerves, and every sinew  
strung ;  
Then with a tempest's whirl, and wary  
eye,  
Pursued his cast, and hurl'd the orb on  
high ;

The orb on high, tenacious of its  
course,  
True to the mighty arm that gave it  
force,  
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see  
Its ancient lord secure of victory.  
The theatre's green height and woody  
wall  
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall ;  
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleav-  
ing ground,  
While vales and woods and echoing hills  
rebound.  
As when from Ætna's smoking summit  
broke,  
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy  
rock :  
Where Ocean frets beneath the dashing  
oar,  
And parting surges round the vessel  
roar ;  
'Twas there he aim'd the meditated  
harm,  
And scarce Ulysses 'scaped his giant  
arm.

A tiger's pride the victor bore away,  
With native spots and artful labor gay,  
A shining border round the margin  
roll'd,  
And calm'd the terrors of his claws in  
gold.

CAMBRIDGE, *May 8, 1736.*

THE FRAGMENT OF A TRAGEDY,  
*Designed by Mr. Gray on the Subject of  
the Death of Agrippina.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGRIPPINA, *the Empress-mother.*

NERO, *the Emperor.*

POPPÆA, *believed to be in love with OTHO.*

OTHO, *a young man of quality, in love with POPPÆA.*

SENECA, *the Emperor's Preceptor.*

ANICETUS, *Captain of the Guards.*

DEMETRIUS, *the Cynic, friend to SENECA.*

ACERONIA, *Confident to AGRIPPINA.*

SCENE—*The Emperor's villa at Baia.*

ACT I.—SCENE I.

AGRIPPINA.—ACERONIA.

AGRIP. 'Tis well, begone ! your errand  
is perform'd.

[*Speaks as to Anicetus entering.*

The message needs no comment. Tell  
your master,

His mother shall obey him. Say you  
saw her

Yielding due reverence to his high com-  
mand :

Alone, unguarded, and without a lictor,  
As fits the daughter of Germanicus.

Say, she retired to Antium ; there to  
tend

Her household cares, a woman's best  
employment.

What if you add, how she turn'd pale  
and trembled :

You think, you spied a tear stand in her  
eye,

And would have dropp'd, but that her  
pride restrain'd it !

(Go ! you can paint it well) 'twill profit  
you,

And please the stripling. Yet 'twould  
dash his joy

To hear the spirit of Britannicus

Yet walks on earth : at least there are  
who know

Without a spell to raise, and bid it  
fire

A thousand haughty hearts, unused to  
shake  
When a boy frowns, nor to be lured with  
smiles  
To taste of hollow kindness, or partake  
His hospitable board : they are aware  
Of th' unpledged bowl, they love not  
aconite.

ACER. He's gone : and much I hope  
these walls alone  
And the mute air are privy to your  
passion.  
Forgive your servant's fears, who sees  
the danger  
Which fierce resentment cannot fail to  
raise  
In haughty youth, and irritated power.

AGRIP. And dost thou talk to me, to  
me of danger,  
Of haughty youth and irritated power,  
To her that gave it being, her that arm'd  
This painted Jove, and taught his novice  
hand

To aim the forked bolt ; while he stood  
     trembling,  
 Scared at the sound, and dazzled with  
     its brightness ?  
     'Tis like, thou hast forgot, when yet a  
     stranger  
 To adoration, to the grateful steam  
 Of flattery's incense, and obsequious  
     vows  
 From voluntary realms, a puny boy,  
 Deck'd with no other lustre than the  
     blood  
 Of Agrippina's race, he lived unknown  
 To fame, or fortune ; haply eyed at dis-  
     tance  
 Some edileship, ambitious of the power  
 To judge of weights and measures ;  
     scarcely dared  
 On expectation's strongest wing to soar  
 High as the consulate, that empty shade  
 Of long-forgotten liberty : when I  
 Oped his young eye to bear the blaze of  
     greatness ;  
 Show'd him where empire tower'd, and  
     bade him strike

The noble quarry. Gods ! then was the  
 time  
 To shrink from danger ; fear might then  
 have worn  
 The mask of prudence ; but a heart like  
 mine,  
 A heart that glows with the pure Julian  
 fire,  
 If bright Ambition from her craggy seat  
 Display the radiant prize, will mount  
 undaunted,  
 Gain the rough heights, and grasp the  
 dangerous honor.

ACER. Through various life I have  
 pursued your steps,  
 Have seen your soul, and wonder'd at  
 its daring :  
 Hence rise my fears. Nor am I yet to  
 learn  
 How vast the debt of gratitude which  
 Nero  
 To such a mother owes ; the world, you  
 gave him,  
 Suffices not to pay the obligation.



I well remember too (for I was present)  
 When, in a secret and dead hour of night,  
 Due sacrifice perform'd with barb'rous  
     rites  
 Of mutter'd charms, and solemn invo-  
     cation,  
 You bade the Magi call the dreadful  
     powers,  
 That read futurity, to know the fate  
 Impending o'er your son : their answer  
     was,  
 If the son reign, the mother perishes.  
 Perish (you cried) the mother ! reign the  
     son !  
 He reigns, the rest is Heaven's ; who  
     oft has bade,  
 Ev'n when its will seem'd wrote in lines  
     of blood,  
 Th' unthought event disclose a whiter  
     meaning.  
 Think too how oft in weak and sickly  
     minds  
 The sweets of kindness lavishly indulged  
 Rankle to gall ; and benefits too great  
 To be repaid, sit heavy on the soul,

As unrequited wrongs. The willing  
 homage  
 Of prostrate Rome, the senate's joint ap-  
 plause,  
 The riches of the earth, the train of  
 pleasures  
 That wait on youth, and arbitrary  
 sway :  
 These were your gift, and with them you  
 bestow'd  
 The very power he has to be ungrateful.

AGRIP. Thus ever grave and undis-  
 turb'd reflection  
 Pours its cool dictates in the madding  
 ear  
 Of rage, and thinks to quench the fire it  
 feels not.  
 Say'st thou I must be cautious, must be  
 silent,  
 And tremble at the phantom I have  
 raised ?  
 Carry to him thy timid counsels. He  
 Perchance may heed 'em : tell him, too,  
 that one

Who had such liberal power to give,  
     may still  
 With equal power resume that gift, and  
     raise  
 A tempest that shall shake her own crea-  
     tion  
 To its original atoms—tell me ! say,  
 This mighty emperor, this dreaded hero,  
 Has he beheld the glittering front of  
     war ?  
 Knows his soft ear the trumpet's thrill-  
     ing voice,  
 And outcry of the battle ? Have his  
     limbs  
 Sweat under iron harness ? Is he not  
 The silken son of dalliance, nursed in  
     ease  
 And pleasure's flow'ry lap ?—Rubellius  
     lives,  
 And Sylla has his friends, though school'd  
     by fear  
 To bow the supple knee, and court the  
     times,  
 With shows of fair obeisance ; and a  
     call,

Like mine, might serve belike to wake  
 pretensions  
 Drowsier than theirs, who boast the  
 genuine blood  
 Of our imperial house.

ACER. Did I not wish to check this  
 dangerous passion,  
 I might remind my mistress that her nod  
 Can rouse eight hardy legions, wont to  
 stem  
 With stubborn nerves the tide, and face  
 the rigor  
 Of bleak Germania's snows. Four, not  
 less brave,  
 That in Armenia quell the Parthian  
 force  
 Under the warlike Corbulo, by you  
 Mark'd for their leader: these, by ties  
 confirm'd,  
 Of old respect and gratitude, are yours.  
 Surely the Masians too, and those of  
 Egypt,  
 Have not forgot your sire: the eye of  
 Rome

And the Prætorian camp have long re-  
vered,  
With custom'd awe, the daughter, sister,  
wife,  
And mother of their Cæsars.

**AGRIP.**                               **Ha ! by Juno,**  
It bears a noble semblance. On this base  
My great revenge shall rise ; or say we  
    sound  
The trump of Liberty ; there will not  
    want,  
Even in the servile senate, ears to own  
Her spirit-stirring voice ; Soranus there,  
And Cassius ; Vetus too, and Thræsea,  
Minds of the antique cast, rough, stub-  
    born souls,  
That struggle with the yoke. How shall  
    the spark  
Unquenchable, that glows within their  
    breasts,  
Blaze into freedom, when the idle herd  
(Slaves from the womb, created but to  
    stare,  
And bellow in the circus) yet will start,

And shake 'em at the name of Liberty,  
Stung by a senseless word, a vain tra-  
dition,

As there were magic in it? Wrinkled  
beldams

Teach it their grandchildren, as some-  
what rare

That anciently appear'd ; but when ex-  
tends

Beyond their chronicle—oh ! 'tis a cause  
To arm the hand of childhood, and re-  
brace

The slacken'd sinews of time-wearied  
age.

Yes, we may meet, ungrateful boy,  
we may !

Again the buried Genius of old Rome  
Shall from the dust uprear his reverend  
head,

Roused by the shout of millions : there  
before

His high tribunal thou and I appear.

Let majesty sit on thy awful brow,

And lighten from thy eye : around thee  
call

The gilded swarm that wantons in the  
sunshine

Of thy full favor ; Seneca be there  
In gorgeous phrase of labor'd eloquence  
To dress thy plea, and Burrhus strength-  
en it

With his plain soldier's oath, and honest  
seeming.

Against thee, Liberty and Agrippina :  
The world, the prize ; and fair befall the  
victors.

But soft ! why do I waste the fruitless  
hours

In threats unexecuted ? Haste thee, fly  
These hated walls that seem to mock my  
shame,

And cast me forth in duty to their lord.

ACER. 'Tis time to go, the sun is  
high advanced,  
And, ere mid-day, Nero will come to  
Baia.

AGRIP. My thought aches at him ;  
not the basilisk

More deadly to the sight, than is to me  
The cool injurious eye of frozen kindness.  
I will not meet its poison. Let him feel  
Before he sees me.

ACER. Why, then, stays my sovereign,  
Where he so soon may—

AGRIP. Yes, I will be gone,  
But not to Antium — all shall be confess'd,  
Whate'er the frivolous tongue of giddy  
fame  
Has spread among the crowd ; things  
that but whisper'd  
Have arch'd the hearer's brow, and  
riveted  
His eyes in fearful ecstasy ; no matter  
What ; so't be strange, and dreadful.—  
Sorceries,  
Assassinations, poisonings — the deeper  
My guilt, the blacker his ingratitude.  
And you, ye manes of ambition's victims,



Enshrined Claudius, with the pitied  
ghosts

Of the Syllani, doom'd to early death,  
(Ye unavailing horrors, fruitless crimes !)  
If from the realms of night my voice ye  
hear,

In lieu of penitence, and vain remorse,  
Accept my vengeance. Though by me  
ye bled,

He was the cause. My love, my fears  
for him,

Dried the soft springs of pity in my  
heart,

And froze them up with deadly cruelty.  
Yet, if your injured shades demand my  
fate,

If murder cries for murder, blood for  
blood,

Let me not fall alone ; but crush his  
pride,

And sink the traitor in his mother's  
ruin. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.

OTHO.—POPPÆA.

OTHO. Thus far we're safe. Thanks  
to the rosy queen  
Of amorous thefts : and had her wanton  
son  
Lent us his wings, we could not have  
beguiled  
With more elusive speed the dazzled  
sight  
Of wakeful jealousy. Be gay securely ;  
Dispel, my fair, with smiles, the tim'rous  
cloud  
That hangs on thy clear brow. So Helen  
look'd,  
So her white neck reclined, so was she  
borne  
By the young Trojan to his gilded bark  
With fond reluctance, yielding modesty,  
And oft-reverted eye, as if she knew not  
Whether she feared, or wished to be  
pursued.

\* \* \* \* \*

## HYMN TO IGNORANCE.

### *A Fragment.*

HAIL, horrors, hail ! ye ever gloomy  
    bowers,  
Ye gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,  
Where rushy Camus' slowly winding  
    flood  
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud :  
Glad I revisit thy neglected reign,  
Oh take me to thy peaceful shade again !  
But chiefly thee, whose influence breath-  
    ed from high  
Augments the native darkness of the  
    sky ;  
Ah ! Ignorance ! soft salutary power !  
Prostrate with filial reverence I adore.  
Thrice hath Hyperion roll'd his annual  
    race,

Since weeping I forsook thy fond embrace.

Oh say, successful dost thou still oppose  
Thy leaden ægis 'gainst our ancient foes ?  
Still stretch, tenacious of thy right divine,

The massy sceptre o'er thy slumb'ring line ?

And dews Lethean through the land dispense

To steep in slumbers each benighted sense ?

If any spark of wit's delusive ray  
Break out and flash a momentary day,  
With damp, cold touch forbid it to aspire,  
And huddle up in fogs the dang'rous fire.

Oh say—she hears me not, but, careless grown,

Lethargic nods upon her ebon throne.

Goddess ! awake, arise ! alas, my fears !  
Can powers immortal feel the force of years ?

Not thus of old, with ensigns wide unfurl'd,

She rode triumphant o'er the vanquish'd  
world ;

Fierce nations owned her unresisted  
might,

And all was ignorance and all was night.  
Oh ! sacred age ! Oh ! times forever  
lost !

(The schoolman's glory, and the church-  
man's boast.)

Forever gone—yet still to fancy new,  
Her rapid wings the transient scene  
pursue,

And bring the buried ages back to view.  
High on her car behold the grandam  
ride

Like old Sesostris with barbaric pride ;  
\* \* \* a team of harness'd monarchs  
bend

\* \* \* \* \*

# THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.

## *A Fragment.*

### ESSAY I.

—— Πόταγ', ὃ 'γαθεί' τὰν γὰρ αἰοιδὰν  
Οὔτι πα εἰς 'Αἶδαν γε τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.

THEOCRITUS, Id. i. 63.

As sickly plants betray a niggard earth,  
Whose barren bosom starves her generous birth,  
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains,  
Their roots to feed, and fill their vacant veins :  
And as in climes, where Winter holds his reign,  
The soil, though fertile, will not teem in vain,  
Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,

Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish  
skies :

So draw mankind in vain the vital airs,  
Uniform'd, unfriended, by those kindly  
cares,

That health and vigor to the soul impart,  
Spread the young thought, and warm  
the opening heart :

So fond Instruction on the growing pow-  
ers

Of nature idly lavishes her stores,  
If equal Justice with unclouded face  
Smile not indulgent on the rising race,  
And scatter with a free, though frugal  
hand,

Light golden showers of plenty o'er the  
land :

But Tyranny has fix'd her empire there,  
To check their tender hopes with chilling  
fear,

And blast the blooming promise of the  
year.

This spacious animated scene survey,  
From where the rolling orb, that gives  
the day,

His sable sons with nearer course sur-  
 rounds  
 To either pole, and life's remotest  
 bounds,  
 How rude soe'er th' exterior form we  
 find,  
 Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,  
 Alike to all, the kind, impartial heav'n  
 The sparks of truth and happiness has  
 giv'n :  
 With sense to feel, with memory to re-  
 tain,  
 They follow pleasure, and they fly from  
 pain ;  
 Their judgment mends the plan their  
 fancy draws,  
 The event presages, and explores the  
 cause ;  
 The soft returns of gratitude they know,  
 By fraud elude, by force repel the foe ;  
 While mutual wishes, mutual woes en-  
 dear  
 The social smile, the sympathetic tear.  
 Say, then, through ages by what fate  
 confined



To different climes seem different souls  
assigned ?

Here measured laws and philosophic  
ease

Fix, and improve the polished arts of  
peace ;

There industry and gain their vigils keep,  
Command the winds, and tame the un-  
willing deep :

Here force and hardy deeds of blood  
prevail ;

There languid pleasure sighs in every  
gale.

Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar  
Has Scythia breathed the living cloud of  
war ;

And, where the deluge burst, with  
sweepy sway

Their arms, their kings, their gods were  
rolled away.

As oft have issued, host impelling host,  
The blue-eyed myriads of the Baltic  
coast.

The prostrate south to the destroyer  
yields

Her boasted titles, and her golden fields :  
With grim delight the brood of winter  
view  
A brighter day, and heav'ns of azure  
hue ;  
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing  
rose,  
And quaff the pendent vintage as it  
grows.  
Proud of the yoke and pliant to the rod,  
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's  
nod,  
While European freedom still withstands  
Th' encroaching tide that drowns her  
lessening lands ;  
And sees far off, with an indignant groan,  
Her native plains, and empires once her  
own ?  
Can opener skies and suns of fiercer  
flame  
O'erpower the fire, that animates our  
frame ;  
As lamps, that shed at eve a cheerful  
ray,  
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day ?

118 POEMS OF THOMAS GRAY.

Need we the influence of the northern  
star  
To string our nerves and steel our hearts  
to war ?  
And, where the face of nature laughs  
around,  
Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted  
ground ?  
Unmanly thought ! what seasons can  
control,  
What fancied zone can circumscribe the  
soul,  
Who, conscious of the source from  
whence she springs,  
By reason's light, on resolution's wings,  
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless  
goes  
O'er Libya's deserts and through Zem-  
bla's snows ;  
She bids each slumb'ring energy awake,  
Another touch, another temper take,  
Suspends th' inferior laws that rule our  
clay :  
The stubborn elements confess her  
sway ;

Their little wants, their low desires, re-  
fine,

And raise the mortal to a height divine.

Not but the human fabric from the  
birth

Imbibes a flavor of its parent earth :

As various tracts enforce a various toil,  
The manners speak the idiom of their  
soil.

An iron race the mountain-cliffs main-  
tain,

Foes to the gentler genius of the plain :  
For where unwearied sinews must be  
found

With sidelong plough to quell the flinty  
ground,

To turn the torrent's swift-descending  
flood,

To brave the savage rushing from the  
wood,

What wonder if to patient valor train'd,  
They guard with spirit, what by strength  
they gain'd ?

And while their rocky ramparts round  
they see,

The rough abode of want and liberty,  
 (As lawless force from confidence will  
     grow)  
 Insult the plenty of the vales below ?  
 What wonder, in the sultry climes, that  
     spread  
 Where Nile redundant o'er his summer-  
     bed  
 From his broad bosom life and verdure  
     flings,  
 And broods o'er Egypt with his wat'ry  
     wings,  
 If with advent'rous oar and ready sail  
 The dusky people drive before the gale ;  
 Or on frail floats to neighb'ring cities  
     ride,  
 That rise and glitter o'er the ambient  
     tide.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

[The following couplet, which was intended to have  
 been introduced in the poem on the Alliance of  
 Education and Government, is much too beauti-  
 ful to be lost.—*Mason*.]

When love could teach a monarch to be  
     wise,  
 And gospel-light first dawn'd from Bul-  
     len's eyes.

## STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

### *A Fragment.*

~~In~~ silent gaze the tuneful choir among,  
Half pleased, half blushing, let the  
Muse admire,  
While Bentley leads her sister-art along,  
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.

See, in their course, each transitory  
thought  
Fix'd by his touch a lasting essence  
take ;  
Each dream, in fancy's airy coloring  
wrought,  
To local symmetry and life awake !

The tardy rhymes that used to linger on,  
To censure cold, and negligent o:  
fame,

In swifter measures animated run,  
And catch a lustre from his genuine  
flame.

Ah ! could they catch his strength, his  
easy grace,  
His quick creation, his unerring line ;  
The energy of Pope they might efface,  
And Dryden's harmony submit to  
mine.

But not to one in this benighted age  
Is that diviner inspiration giv'n,  
That burns in Shakespeare's or in Mil-  
ton's page,  
The pomp and prodigality of heav'n.

As when conspiring in the diamond's  
blaze,  
The meaner gems that singly charm  
the sight,  
Together dart their intermingled rays,  
And dazzle with a luxury of light.

Enough for me, if to some feeling breast  
My lines a secret sympathy "impart ;"

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY. 123

And as their pleasing influence "flows  
confest,"

A sigh of soft reflection "heaves the  
heart."

\* \* \* \* \*



SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARAC-  
TER.

*Written in 1761, and found in one of  
his pocket-books.*

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to  
importune,

He had not the method of making a fort-  
une :

Could love, and could hate, so was  
thought somewhat odd ;

No very great wit, he believed in a God :

A post or a pension he did not desire,

But left Church and State to Charles  
Townshend and Squire.

## AMATORY LINES.

WITH beauty, with pleasure surrounded,  
to languish—

To weep without knowing the cause of  
my anguish :

To start from short slumbers, and wish  
for the morning—

To close my dull eyes when I see it re-  
turning ;

Sighs sudden and frequent, looks ever  
dejected—

Words that steal from my tongue, by no  
meaning connected !

Ah ! say, fellow-swains, how these symp-  
toms befell me ?

They smile, but reply not.—Sure Delia  
will tell me !

## SONG.

THYRSIS, when we parted, swore  
Ere the spring he would return—  
Ah ! what means yon violet flower !  
And the bud that decks the thorn !  
'Twas the lark that upward sprung !  
'Twas the nightingale that sung !

Idle notes ! untimely green !  
Why this unavailing haste ?  
Western gales and skies serene  
Speak not always winter past.  
Cease, my doubts, my fears to move,  
Spare the honor of my love.

## TOPHET.

### *An Epigram.*

THUS Tophet look'd ; so grinn'd the  
brawling fiend,  
Whilst frighted prelates bow'd and call'd  
him friend.  
Our mother-church, with half-averted  
sight,  
Blush'd as she bless'd her grisly prose-  
lyte ;  
Hosannas rung through hell's tremen-  
dous borders.  
And Satan's self had thoughts of taking  
orders.

## IMPROMPTU,

*Suggested by a View, in 1766, of the Seat  
and Ruins of a Deceased Nobleman,  
at Kingsgate, Kent.*

OLD, and abandon'd by each venal  
friend,

Here H——d form'd the pious reso-  
lution

To smuggle a few years, and strive to  
mend

A broken character and constitution.

On this congenial spot he fix'd his  
choice ;

Earl Goodwin trembled for his neigh-  
boring sand ;

Here sea-gulls scream, and cormorants  
rejoice,

And mariners, though shipwreck'd,  
dread to land.

Here reign the blustering North and  
 blighting East,  
 No tree is heard to whisper, bird to  
 sing ;  
 Yet Nature could not furnish out the  
 feast,  
 Art he invokes new horrors still to  
 bring.

Here mouldering fanes and battlements  
 arise,  
 Turrets and arches nodding to their  
 fall,  
 Unpeopled monast'ries delude our eyes,  
 And mimic desolation covers all.

“ Ah ! ” said the sighing peer, “ had  
 B—te been true,  
 Nor M—’s, R—’s, B—’s friendship  
 vain,  
 Far better scenes than these had blest  
 our view,  
 And realized the beauties which we  
 feign :

130 POEMS OF THOMAS GRAY.

“Purged by the sword and purified by  
fire,  
Then had we seen proud London's  
hated walls ;  
Owls would have hooted in St. Peter's  
choir,  
And foxes stunk and litter'd in St.  
Paul's.”

## EXTRACTS.

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PROPERTIUS, LIB. III. ELEG. V.

v. 19.

"Me juvat in primâ coluisse Heliconâ juventâ," etc.

IMITATED.

LONG as of youth the joyous hours  
remain,

Me may Castalia's sweet recess detain,  
Fast by the umbrageous vale lull'd to  
repose,

Where Aganippe warbles as it flows ;  
Or roused by sprightly sounds from out  
the trance,

I'd in the ring knit hands, and join the  
Muses' dance.

Give me to send the laughing bowl  
around,



My soul in Bacchus' pleasing fetters  
bound ;  
Let on this head unfading flowers reside,  
There bloom the vernal rose's earliest  
pride ;  
And when, our flames commission'd to  
destroy,  
Age step 'twixt Love and me, and inter-  
cept the joy ;  
When my changed head these looks no  
more shall know,  
And all its jetty honors turn to snow ;  
Then let me rightly spell of Nature's  
ways ;  
To Providence, to HIM my thoughts I'd  
raise,  
Who taught this vast machine its stead-  
fast laws,  
That first, eternal, universal cause ;  
Search to what regions yonder star re-  
tires,  
That monthly waning hides her paly  
fires,  
And whence, anew revived, with silver  
light

Relumes her crescent orb to cheer the  
dreary night :  
How rising winds the face of ocean  
sweep,  
Where lie the eternal fountains of the  
deep,  
And whence the cloudy magazines main-  
tain  
Their wintry war, or pour the autumnal  
rain ;  
How flames perhaps, with dire confusion  
hurl'd,  
Shall sink this beauteous fabric of the  
world ;  
What colors paint the vivid arch of  
Jove ;  
What wondrous force the solid earth can  
move,  
When Pindus' self approaching ruin  
dreads,  
Shakes all his pines, and bows his hun-  
dred heads ;  
Why does yon orb, so exquisitely bright,  
Obscure his radiance in a short-lived  
night ;

Whence the Seven-Sisters' congregated  
fires,  
And what Bootes' lazy wagon tires ;  
How the rude surge its sandy bounds  
control ;  
Who measured out the year, and bade  
the seasons roll ;  
If realms beneath those fabled torments  
know,  
Pangs without respite, fires that ever  
glow,  
Earth's monster brood stretch'd on their  
iron bed,  
The hissing terrors round Alecto's  
head,  
Scarce to nine acres Tityus' bulk con-  
fined,  
The triple dog that scares the shadowy  
kind,  
All angry heaven inflicts, or hell can  
feel,  
The pendent rock, Ixion's whirling  
wheel,  
Famine at feasts, or thirst amid the  
stream ;

Or are our fears the enthusiast's empty  
dream,  
And all the scenes, that hurt the grave's  
repose,  
But pictured horror and poetic woes ?  
These soft inglorious joys my hours  
engage ;  
Be love my youth's pursuit, and science  
crown my age.

PROPERTIUS, LIB. II. ELEG. I.

v. 17.

*\* Quod mihi si tantum, Mæcenas, fata dedissent," etc.*

YET would the tyrant Love permit me  
    raise  
My feeble voice, to sound the victor's  
    praise,  
To paint the hero's toil, the ranks of  
    war,  
The laurell'd triumph and the sculptur'd  
    car ;  
No giant race, no tumult of the skies,  
No mountain - structures in my verse  
    should rise,  
Nor tale of Thebes, nor Ilium there  
    should be,  
Nor how the Persian trod the indignant  
    sea ;

Not Marius' Cimbrian wreaths would I  
relate,

Nor lofty Carthage struggling with her  
fate.

Here should Augustus great in arms  
appear,

And thou Mæcenus, be my second care ;  
Here Mutina from flames and famine  
free,

And there the ensanguined wave of  
Sicily,

And sceptred Alexandria's captive shore,  
And sad Philippi, red with Roman gore :  
Then, while the vaulted skies loud throes  
rend,

In golden chains should loaded monarchs  
bend,

And hoary Nile with pensive aspect  
seem

To mourn the glories of his sevenfold  
stream,

While prows, that late in fierce encounter  
met,

Move through the sacred way and vainly  
threat,

Thee too the Muse should consecrate to  
fame,  
And with her garlands weave thy ever-  
faithful name.

But not Callimachus' enervate strain  
May tell of Jove, and Phlegra's blasted  
plain ;

Nor I with unaccustomed vigor trace  
Back to its source divine the Julian race.  
Sailors to tell of winds and seas delight,  
The shepherd of his flock, the soldier of  
the fight.

A milder warfare I in verse display ;  
Each in his proper art should waste the  
day :

Nor thou my gentle calling disapprove,  
To die is glorious in the bed of Love.

Happy the youth, and not unknown to  
fame,  
Whose heart has never felt a second  
flame.

Oh, might that envied happiness be mine !  
To Cinthia all my wishes I confine ;  
Or if, alas ! it be my fate to try  
Another love, the quicker let me die ;

But she, the mistress of my faithful  
breast,

Has oft the charms of constancy confest,  
Condemns her fickle sex's fond mistake,  
And hates the tale of Troy for Helen's  
sake.

Me from myself the soft enchantress  
stole ;

Ah ! let her ever my desires control,  
Or if I fall the victim of her scorn,  
From her loved door may my pale corse  
be borne.

The power of herbs can other harms re-  
move,

And find a cure for every ill, but love.  
The Lemnian's hurt Machaon could re-  
pair,

Heal the slow chief, and send again to  
war ;

To Chiron Phœnix owed his long-lost  
sight,

And Phœbus' son recall'd Androgeon to  
the light,

Here arts are vain, e'en magic here must  
fail,



The powerful mixture and the midnight  
spell,

The hand that can my captive heart re-  
lease,

And to this bosom give its wonted peace,  
May the long thirst of Tantalus allay,  
Or drive the infernal vulture from his  
prey.

For ills unseen what remedy is found ?  
Or who can probe the undiscover'd  
wound ?

The bed avails not, nor the leech's care,  
Nor changing skies can hurt, nor sultry  
air.

'Tis hard th' elusive symptoms to ex-  
plore :

To-day the lover walks, to-morrow is no  
more ;

A train of mourning friends attend his  
pall,

And wonder at the sudden funeral.

When then the Fates that breath they  
gave shall claim,

And the short marble but preserve a  
name,

A little verse my all that shall remain ;  
Thy passing courser's slackened speed  
restrain ;

(Thou envied honor of thy poet's days,  
Of all our youth the ambition and the  
praise !)

Then to my quiet urn a while draw near,  
And say, while o'er that place you drop  
the tear,

Love and the fair were of his youth the  
pride ;

He lived, while she was kind and when  
she frown'd, he died.

TASSO, GERUS. LIB. CANT. XIV.  
ST. 32.

*"Preser commiato, e sì 'l desio gli sprona," etc.*

DISMISS'D at length, they break through  
all delay  
To tempt the dangers of the doubtful  
way ;  
And first to Ascalon their steps they  
bend,  
Whose walls along the neighboring sea  
extend,  
Nor yet in prospect rose the distant  
shore ;  
Scarce the hoarse waves from far were  
heard to roar,  
When thwart the road a river roll'd its  
flood  
Tempestuous, and all further course  
withstood ;

The torrent stream his ancient bounds  
disdains,  
Swoll'n with new force, and late - de-  
scending rains.  
Irresolute they stand ; when lo ! appears  
The wondrous Sage : vigorous he seem'd  
in years,  
Awful his mien, low as his feet there  
flows  
A vestment unadorn'd, though white as  
new-fall'n snows ;  
Against the stream the wave secure he  
trod.  
His head a chaplet bore, his hand a rod.  
As on the Rhine, when Boreas' fury  
reigns,  
And winter binds the floods in icy  
chains,  
Swift shoots the village-maid in rustic  
play,  
Smooth, without step, adown the shin-  
ing way,  
Fearless in long excursion loves to glide,  
And sports and wantons o'er the frozen  
tide.

144 POEMS OF THOMAS GRAY.

So moved the seer, but on no harden'd  
plain ;  
The river boil'd beneath, and rush'd  
toward the main.  
Where fix'd in wonder stood the warlike  
pair,  
His course he turn'd, and thus relieved  
their care :  
    "Vast, oh my friends, and difficult  
    the toil  
To seek your hero in a distant soil !  
No common helps, no common guide ye  
need,  
Art it requires, and more than winged  
speed.  
What length of sea remains, what vari-  
ous lands,  
Oceans unknown, inhospitable sands !  
For adverse fate the captive chief has  
hurl'd  
Beyond the confines of our narrow world:  
Great things and full of wonder in your  
ears  
I shall unfold ; but first dismiss your  
fears ;

Nor doubt with me to tread the down-  
ward road

That to the grotto leads, my dark abode."

Scarce had he said, before the war-  
riors' eyes

When mountain-high the waves dispart-  
ed rise ;

The flood on either hand its billows  
rears,

And in the midst a spacious arch ap-  
pears.

Their hands he seized, and down the  
steep he led

Beneath the obedient river's inmost  
bed ;

The watery glimmerings of a fainter  
day

Discover'd half, and half-conceal'd their  
way ;

As when athwart the dusky woods by  
night

The uncertain crescent gleams a sickly  
light.

Through subterraneous passages they  
went,

Earth's inmost cells, and caves of deep  
descent ;  
Of many a flood they view'd the secret  
source,  
The birth of rivers rising to their course,  
Whate'er with copious train its channel  
fills,  
Floats into lakes, and bubbles into rills ;  
The Po was there to see, Danubius' bed,  
Euphrates' fount, and Nile's mysterious  
head.  
Further they pass, where ripening min-  
erals flow  
And embryo metals undigested glow,  
Sulphureous veins and living silver shine,  
Which soon the parent sun's warm pow-  
ers refine,  
In one rich mass unite the precious  
store,  
The parts combine and harden into ore :  
Here gems break through the night with  
glittering beam,  
And paint the margin of the costly  
stream,  
All stones of lustre shoot their vivid ray,

And mix'd attemper'd in a various day ;  
Here the soft emerald smiles of verdant  
    hue,  
And rubies flame, with sapphire's heav-  
    enly blue,  
The diamond there attracts the won-  
    drous sight,  
Proud of its thousand dyes and luxury of  
    light.





## NOTES.

### ON THE SPRING.

P. 11. The original manuscript title given by Gray to this Ode was "Noontide." It appeared for the first time in Dodsley's Collection, vol. ii. p. 271, under the title of "Ode."

### ON THE DEATH OF A FAVORITE CAT.

P. 14. On a favorite cat, called Selima, that fell into a china tub with gold fishes in it, and was drowned. Walpole, after the death of Gray, placed the china vase on a pedestal at Strawberry Hill, with a few lines of the Ode for its inscription.

### ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

P. 17. *Her Henry's holy shade.*] King Henry the Sixth, founder of the college.

### THE PROGRESS OF POESY.

P. 25. *Æolian lyre.*] Pindar styles his own poetry "Æolian."

P. 26. *Ceres' golden reign.*] Fields of corn.

P. 26. *Oh! Sov'reign of the willing soul.*] Power of harmony to calm the turbulent passions of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.

P. 26. *The Lord of War.*] Mars, the god of war.

P. 26. *The feather'd king.*] The eagle of Jove.

P. 27. *Thee the voice, the dance, obey.]* Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.

P. 27. *Idalia ]* The favorite retreat of Venus in Cyprus.

P. 27. *Cytherea's day.]* The festival of Venus.

P. 28. *Man's feeble race what ills await !]* To compensate the real and imaginary ills of life, the muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends the day, by its cheerful presence, to dispel the gloom and terrors of the night.

P. 28. *In climes beyond the solar road.]* Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations : its connection with Liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it.

P. 29. *Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep.]* Progress of Poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there. Spenser imitated the Italian writers ; Milton improved on them ; but this school expired soon after the Restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since.

P. 30. *In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid.]* SHAKESPEARE.

P. 31. *Nor second He, that rode sublime.]* MILTON.

P. 31. *The living throne, the sapphire blaze.]* " For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And above the firmament, that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone. This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord." Ezek. i. 26, 28.

P. 31. *With necks in thunder cloth'd.*] "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?"—Job. This verse and the foregoing are meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes.

P. 32. *That the Theban eagle bear.*] Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamor in vain below, while it pursues its flight, regardless of their noise.

#### THE BARD.

P. 33. This Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward the First, when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the Bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

P. 33. *Helm, nor hauberk's twisted mail.*] The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets, or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.

P. 33. *Snowdon's shaggy side.*] Snowdon was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which includes all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway.

P. 34. *Stout Glo'ster.*] Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford: married at Westminster, May 2, 1290, to Joan de Acres or Acon (so called from having been born at Acon in the Holy Land), second daughter of King Edward.—He died in 1295.

P. 34. *"To arms!" cried Mortimer.*] Edmund de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lord Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.

P. 35. *On dreary Arvon's shore they lie.*] The

shores of Caernarvonshire, opposite to the Isle of Anglesey.

P. 36. *And weave with bloody hands the tissue of thy line.*] See the Norwegian Ode (The Fatal Sisters) that follows.

P. 36. *The shrieks of death thro' Berkley's roof that ring.*] Edward the Second, cruelly butchered in Berkley Castle.

P. 36. *She-wolf of France.*] Isabel of France, Edward the Second's adulterous queen.

P. 37. *The scourge of heav'n.*] Triumphs of Edward the Third in France.

P. 37. *Low on his funeral couch he lies!*] Death of Edward the Third, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and his mistress.

P. 37. *Is the sable warrior fled!*] Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.

P. 37. *Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows.*] Magnificence of Richard the Second's reign. See Froissart, and other contemporary writers.

P. 38. *Fill high the sparkling bowl.*] Richard the Second, as we are told by Archbishop Scroop and the confederate Lords in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers, was starved to death. The story of his assassination, by Sir Piers of Exton, is of much later date.

P. 38. *Heard ye the din of battle bray.*] Ruinous wars of York and Lancaster.

P. 38. *Ye towers of Julius, London's lasting shame,*

*With many a foul and midnight murder fed.*]

Henry the Sixth, George Duke of Clarence, Edward the Fifth, Richard Duke of York, etc., be-

lieved to have been murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.

P. 38. *Revere his consort's faith.*] Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.

P. 38. *His father's fame.*] Henry the Fifth.

P. 39. *And spare the meek usurper's holy head.*] Henry the Sixth, very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.

P. 39. *Above, below, the rose of snow.*] The white and red roses, devices of York and Lancaster.

P. 39. *The bristled boar in infant-gore.*] The silver boar was the badge of Richard the Third; whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of *the boar*.

P. 39. *Half of thy heart we consecrate.*] Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proof she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington, Waltham, and other places.

P. 40. *No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail*] It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that King Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and would return again to reign over Britain.

P. 40. *All hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's issue, hail!*] Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island; which seemed to be accomplished in the house of Tudor.

P. 40. *Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face.*] Speed, relating an audience given by Queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, ambassador of Poland,

says, "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartnesse of her princelie checkes."

P. 41. *Hear from the grave, great Taliessin, hear.*] Taliessin, chief of the bards, flourished in the sixth century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.

P. 41. *In buskin'd measures move.*] SHAKESPEARE.

P. 41. *A voice, as of the cherub-choir.*] MILTON.

P. 41. *And distant warblings lessen on my ear.*] The succession of poets after Milton's time.

#### ODE FOR MUSIC.

P. 43. This Ode was performed in the Senate-House at Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the installation of his Grace Augustus-Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.

P. 45. *Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow.*] Edward the Third, who added the fleur-de-lys of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity College.

P. 45. *And sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn.*] Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, comte de St. Paul in France; of whom tradition says that her husband, Audemar de Valentia, Earl of Pembroke, was slain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundress of Pembroke College or Hall, under the name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.

P. 45. *Princely Clare.*] Elizabeth de Burg, Countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the Earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, by Joan of

Acres, daughter of Edward the First. Hence the poet gives her the epithet of *princely*. She founded Clare Hall.

P. 46. *And Anjou's heroine, and the paler rose.*] Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry the Sixth, foundress of Queen's College. The poet has celebrated her conjugal fidelity in "The Bard," epode 2d, line 13th.—Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward the Fourth, hence called the paler rose, as being of the house of York. She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.

P. 46. *And either Henry there.*] Henry the Sixth and Eighth. The former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity College.

P. 47. *The venerable Marg'ret see!*] Countess of Richmond and Derby; the mother of Henry the Seventh, foundress of St. John's and Christ's Colleges.

P. 47. *A Tudor's fire, a Beaufort's grace.*] The Countess was a Beaufort and married to a Tudor: hence the application of this line to the Duke of Grafton, who claims descent from both these families.

P. 48. *The laureate wreath, that Cecil wore, she brings.*] Lord Treasurer Burleigh was Chancellor of the University in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

#### THE FATAL SISTERS.

P. 49. To be found in the *Orcades* of Thormodus Torfæus; Hafniæ, 1697, folio; and also in Bartholinus, p. 617, lib. iii. c. 1, 4to.

*Vitt er orpit fyrir valfalli, etc.*

In the eleventh century *Sigurd*, Earl of the Orkney Islands, went with a fleet of ships and a con-



siderable body of troops into Ireland, to the assistance of *Sictryg with the silken beard*, who was then making war on his father-in-law *Brian*, King of Dublin; the earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and *Sictryg* was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of *Brian* their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle), a native of Caithness in Scotland, of the name of *Durrad*, saw at a distance a number of persons on horseback riding at full speed toward a hill, and seeming to enter into it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till, looking through an opening in the rocks, he saw twelve gigantic figures resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song; which when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and (each taking her portion) galloped six to the north, and as many to the south. These were the *Vulkyriur*, female divinities, *Parcæ Militares*, servants of *Odin* (or *Woden*) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies *Choosers of the slain*. They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands; and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to *Valkalla*, the hall of *Odin*, or paradise of the brave, where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale: their numbers are not agreed upon, some authors representing them as *six*, some as *four*.

#### THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

P. 53. The original is to be found in *Sæmund's Edda*, and in *Bartholinus, De Causis contemnendæ Mortis*; Hafniæ, 169, quarto, lib. iii. c. ii. p. 632. *Upreis Odinn allða gauþr, etc.*

P. 53. *Hela's drear abode.*] Nifheliar, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle. Over it presided Hela, the goddess of death. Hela, in the Edda, is described with a dreadful countenance, and her body half flesh-color and half blue.

P. 53. *Him the dog of darkness spied.*] The Edda gives this dog the name of Managarmar. He fed upon the lives of those that were to die.

P. 55. *Tell me what is done below.*] Odin was anxious about the fate of his son Balder, who had dreamed he was soon to die. He was killed by Odin's other son, Hoder, who was himself slain by Vali, the son of Odin and Rinda, consonant with this prophecy. (See the Edda.)

P. 55. *Once again my call obey.*] Women were looked upon by the Gothic nations as having a peculiar insight into futurity; and some there were that made profession of magic arts and divination. These travelled round the country, and were received in every house with great respect and honor. Such a woman bore the name of Volva Seidkona or Spakona. The dress of Thorbiorga, one of these prophetesses, is described at large in Eirik's Raud Sogu (Apud Bartholin. lib. i. cap. iv. p. 688): 'She had on a blue vest spangled all over with stones, a necklace of glass beads, and a cap made of the skin of a black lamb, lined with white cat-skin. She leaned on a staff adorned with brass, with a round head set with stones; and was girt with an Hunlandish belt, at which hung her pouch full of magical instruments. Her buskins were of rough calf-skin, bound on with thongs studded with knobs of brass, and her gloves of white cat-skin, the fur turned inwards,' etc. They were also called *Fiolkyngi*, or

*Fiolkunnug*, i.e. Multi-scia; and *Visindakona*, i.e. Oraculorum Mulier; *Nornir*, i.e. Parcæ.

P. 56. *Who ne'er shall comb his raven-hair.*] King Harold made (according to the singular custom of his time) a solemn vow never to *clip or comb his hair* till he should have extended his sway over the whole country. (Herbert's *Iceland. Translat.* p. 39.)

P. 57. *What virgins these, in speechless woe?*] "It is not certain," says Mr. Herbert, "what Odin means by the question concerning the weeping virgins; but it has been supposed that it alludes to the embassy afterward sent by Frigga to try to redeem Balder from the infernal regions, and that Odin betrays his divinity by mentioning what had not yet happened."—*Iceland. Translat.* p. 48.

P. 57. *But mother of the giant brood !*] In the Latin "*mater trium gigantum*:" probably Angerbode, who from her name seems to be "no prophetess of good;" and who bore to Lok, as the Edda says, three children, the wolf Fenris, the great serpent of Midgard, and Hela, all of them called giants in that system of mythology.

P. 58. *Till Lok has burst his tenfold chain.*] Lok is the evil being who continues in chains till the *twilight of the gods* approaches: when he shall break his bonds, the human race, the stars, and sun shall disappear; the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies; even Odin himself and his kindred deities shall perish.

#### THE TRIUMPHS OF OWEN.

P. 59. From Evans, Spec. of the Welsh Poetry, 1764, quarto, p. 25, where is a prose version of this poem, and p. 127. Owen succeeded his father Griffith app Cynan in the principality of N. Wales,

A.D. 1137. This battle was fought in the year 1157. Jones, *Relics*, vol. ii. p. 36.

The original Welsh of this poem was the composition of Gwalchmai, the son of Melir, immediately after Prince Owen Gwynedd had defeated the combined fleets of Iceland, Denmark, and Norway, which had invaded his territory on the coast of Anglesea.

P. 59. *Gwyneth*.] North Wales.

P. 59. *Lochlin*.] Denmark.

P. 60. *The dragon-son of Mona stands*.] The red dragon is the device of Cadwallader, which all his descendants bore on their banners.

P. 60. *There the thund'ring strokes begin*.] "It seems," says Dr. Evans, "that the fleet landed in some part of the Firth of Menai, and that it was a kind of mixed engagement, some fighting from the shore, others from the ships: and probably the great slaughter was owing to its being low water, and that they could not sail."

#### EPITAPH ON MRS. JANE CLERKE.

P. 63. This lady, the wife of Dr. John Clerke, physician at Epsom, died April 27, 1757; and was buried in the church of Beckenham, Kent.

#### EPITAPH ON SIR WILLIAM WILLIAMS.

P. 64. This Epitaph was written at the request of Mr. Frederick Montagu, who intended to have inscribed it on a monument at Belleisle, at the siege of which Sir W. Williams was killed, 1761.

#### THE DEATH OF HOEL.

P. 66. Selected from the Gododin of Aneurin, styled the Monarch of the Bards. He flourished about the time of Taliessin, A.D. 570. See Mr. Evans' *Specimens*, pp. 71 and 73.

"Aneurin with the flowing Muse, King of Bards, brother to Gildas Albanus the historian, lived under Mynyddawg of Edinburgh, a prince of the North, whose Eurdorchogion, or warriors wearing the golden torques, three hundred and sixty-three in number, were all slain, except Aneurin and two others, in a battle with the Saxons at Cattræth, on the eastern coast of Yorkshire. His Gododin, an heroic poem written on that event, is perhaps the oldest and noblest production of that age." Jones' *Relics*, vol. i. 17.

P. 66. *Upon Deira's squadron hurl'd.*] The kingdom of Deira included the counties of Yorkshire, Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.

#### HAVE YE SEEN, ETC.

P. 67. This and the following short fragment ought to have appeared among the Posthumous Pieces; but it was thought preferable to insert them in this place with the preceding fragment from the Gododin.

#### ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

P. 74. *Far from the madding crowd.*] In the first edition, the following verse preceded this:

"Hark! how the sacred calm that breathes around  
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,  
In still small accents whisp'ring from the ground  
A grateful earnest of eternal peace."

P. 77. "Before the Epitaph, Mr. Gray originally inserted a very beautiful stanza, which was printed in some of the first editions, but afterward omitted, because he thought it was too long a parenthesis in this place. The lines however are, in themselves, exquisitely fine, and demand preservation:

" 'There scatter'd oft, the earliest of the year,  
By hands unseen are showers of violets found :  
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,  
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.' "

▲ LONG STORY.

P. 79. Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, previous to its publication, was handed about in manuscript; and had among other admirers the Lady Cobham, who resided at the mansion-house at Stoke Pogis. The performance inducing her to wish for the author's acquaintance, her relation, Miss Speed, and Lady Schaub, then at her house, undertook to effect it. These two ladies waited upon the author at his aunt's solitary habitation, where he at that time resided; and not finding him at home, they left a card behind them. Mr. Gray, surprised at such a compliment, returned the visit. And as the beginning of this acquaintance bore some appearance of romance, he soon after gave a humorous account of it in the verses, which he entitled "A Long Story." Printed in 1753, with Mr. Bentley's designs.

P. 79. *An ancient pile of building stands.*] In the sixteenth century the house belonged to the Earls of Huntingdon, and to the family of Hatton. On the death of Lady Cobham, 1760, the estate was purchased from her executors by the late Hon. Thomas Penn, Lord Proprietary of Pennsylvania: his son, the present John Penn, Esq., finding the interior of the ancient mansion in a state of considerable decay, it was taken down in the year 1789, with the exception of a wing, which was preserved, partly for the sake of its effects as a ruin, harmonizing with the churchyard, the poet's house, and the surrounding scenery.

P. 79. *The ceiling's fretted height.*] The style of building called Queen Elizabeth's is here admirably described, both with regard to its beauties and defects; the third and fourth stanzas delineate the fantastic manners of the time with equal truth and humor.

P. 79. *My grave Lord-Keeper.*] Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing.

P. 79. *Brawls.*] Brawls were figure-dances then in fashion.

P. 80. *The first came cap-à-pie from France.*] The lady's husband, Sir Luke Schaub, had been ambassador at Paris some years before.

P. 80. *The other Amazon.*] Miss Harriet Speed, Lady C.'s relation, afterward married to the Count de Viry, Sardinian Envoy at the court of London.

P. 81. *Mr. P—t.*] The Rev. Mr. Pult, tutor to the Duke of Bridgewater, then at Eton School.

P. 82. *To rid the manor of such vermin.*] Henry the Fourth, in the fourth year of his reign, issued out the following *commission* against this species of *vermin*: "And it is enacted, that no master-rimer, minstrel, or other vagabond, be in anywise sustained in the land of Wales, to make commoiths, or gatherings upon the people there."

P. 82. *O'er stiles they ventured.*] The walk from Stoke old mansion to the house occupied by the poet's family is peculiarly retired. The house is the property of Captain Salter, and it has belonged to his family for many generations. It is a charming spot for a summer residence, but has undergone great alterations and improvements since Gray gave it up in 1758.

P. 83. *A spell upon the table.*] The note which the ladies left upon the table.

P. 84. *And from the gallery.*] The music-gallery which overlooked the hall.

P. 84. *Tyacke.*] The housekeeper.

P. 85. *Squib.*] Groom of the chamber.

P. 85. *Groom.*] The steward.

P. 85. *Maclean.*] A famous highwayman, hanged the week before.

P. 86. See a Sequel to the Long Story, in Hake-will's History of Windsor, by John Penn, Esq., and a further sequel to that, by the late laureate, H. J. Pye, Esq.

#### ODE ON THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE.

P. 87. Left unfinished by Gray. With additions by Mason, distinguished by inverted commas.

#### TRANSLATION OF A PASSAGE FROM STATIUS.

P. 92. This translation, which Gray sent to West, consisted of about a hundred and ten lines. Mr. Mason selected twenty-seven lines, which he published, as Gray's first attempt in English verse.

#### THE FRAGMENT OF A TRAGEDY.

P. 95. "The Britannicus of Racine, I know, was one of Gray's most favorite plays; and the admirable manner in which I have heard him say that he saw it represented at Paris, seems to have led him to choose the death of Agrippina for his first and only effort in the drama. The execution of it also, as far as it goes, is so very much in Racine's taste, that I suspect, if that great poet had been born an Englishman, he would have written precisely in the same style and manner. However, as there is at present in this nation a general prejudice against declamatory plays, I agree with a learned



friend who perused the manuscript that this fragment will be little relished by the many: yet the admirable strokes of nature and character with which it abounds, and the majesty of its diction, prevent me from withholding from the few, who I expect will relish it, so great a curiosity (to call it nothing more) as part of a tragedy written by Gray. These persons well know that, till style and sentiment be a little more regarded, mere action and passion will never secure reputation to the author, whatever they may do to the actor. It is the business of the one 'to strut and fret his hour upon the stage;' and if he frets and struts enough, he is sure to find his reward in the plaudit of an upper gallery; but the other ought to have some regard to the cooler judgment of the closet: for I will be bold to say, that if Shakspeare himself had not written a multitude of passages which please there as much as they do on the stage, his reputation would not stand so universally high as it does at present. Many of these passages, to the shame of our theatrical taste, are omitted constantly in the representation: but I say not this from conviction that the mode of writing which Gray pursued is the best for dramatic purposes. I think myself, what I have asserted elsewhere, that a medium between the French and English taste would be preferable to either; and yet this medium, if hit with the greatest nicety, would fail of success on our theatre, and that for a very obvious reason. Actors (I speak of the troop collectively) must all learn to speak as well as act, in order to do justice to such a drama.

"But let me haste to give the reader what little insight I can into Gray's plan, as I find and select it from two detached papers.

## "AGRIPPINA, A TRAGEDY.

"The argument drawn out by him, in these two papers, under the idea of a plot and under-plot, I shall here unite ; as it will tend to show that the action itself was possessed of sufficient unity.

The drama opens with the indignation of Agrippina, at receiving her son's orders from Anicetus to remove from Baïæ, and to have her guard taken from her. At this time Otho, having conveyed Poppæa from the house of her husband Rufus Crispinus, brings her to Baïæ, where he means to conceal her among the crowd ; or, if his fraud is discovered, to have recourse to the Emperor's authority ; but, knowing the lawless temper of Nero, he determines not to have recourse to that expedient but on the utmost necessity. In the meantime he commits her to the care of Anicetus, whom he takes to be his friend, and in whose age he thinks he may safely confide. Nero is not yet come to Baïæ ; but Seneca, whom he sends before him, informs Agrippina of the accusation concerning Rubellius Plancus, and desires her to clear herself, which she does briefly : but demands to see her son, who, on his arrival, acquits her of all suspicion, and restores her to her honors. In the mean while, Anicetus, to whose care Poppæa had been entrusted by Otho, contrives the following plot to ruin Agrippina : he betrays his trust to Otho, and brings Nero, as it were by chance, to the sight of the beautiful Poppæa ; the Emperor is immediately struck with her charms, and she, by a feigned resistance, increases his passion : though, in reality, she is from the first dazzled with the prospect of empire, and forgets Otho : she therefore joins Anicetus in his design of ruining Agrippina, soon perceiving that it

will be for her interest. Otho, hearing that the Emperor had seen Poppæa, is much enraged ; but not knowing that this interview was obtained through the treachery of Anicetus, is readily persuaded by him to see Agrippina in secret, and acquaint her with his fears that her son Nero would marry Poppæa. Agrippina, to support her own power, and to wean the Emperor from the love of Poppæa, gives Otho encouragement, and promises to support him. Anicetus secretly introduces Nero to hear their discourse ; who resolves immediately on his mother's death, and by Anicetus' means, to destroy her by drowning. A solemn feast, in honor of their reconciliation, is to be made ; after which, she being to go by sea to Bauli, the ship is so contrived as to sink or crush her ; she escapes by accident, and returns to Baia. In this interval Otho has an interview with Poppæa ; and being duped a second time by Anicetus and her, determines to fly with her into Greece, by means of a vessel which is to be furnished by Anicetus ; but he, pretending to remove Poppæa on board in the night, conveys her to Nero's apartment ; she then encourages and determines Nero to banish Otho, and finish the horrid deed he had attempted on his mother. Anicetus undertakes to execute his resolves ; and, under pretence of a plot upon the Emperor's life, is sent with a guard to murder Agrippina, who is still at Baia in imminent fear, and irresolute how to conduct herself. The account of her death, and the Emperor's horror and fruitless remorse, finishes the drama."

—MASON.

#### THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATION AND GOVERNMENT.

P. 113. "Instead of compiling tables of chronology and natural history, why did not Mr. Gray apply

the powers of his genius to finish the philosophic poem of which he has left such an exquisite specimen?"—GIBBON.

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

P. 121. These were in compliment to Bentley, who drew a set of designs for Gray's poems, particularly a head-piece to the *Long Story*. The original drawings are in the library at Strawberry Hill. See H. Walpole's *Works*, vol. ii. p. 447. The words within the inverted commas were supplied by Mason, a corner of the old manuscript copy being torn.

SKETCH OF HIS OWN CHARACTER.

P. 124. *Squire.*] At that time Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and afterward Bishop of St. David's.

SONG.

P. 126. Written at the request of Miss Speed, to an old air of Geminiani:—the thought from the French.

IMPROMPTU.

P. 128. Written at Denton in the spring of 1766.

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